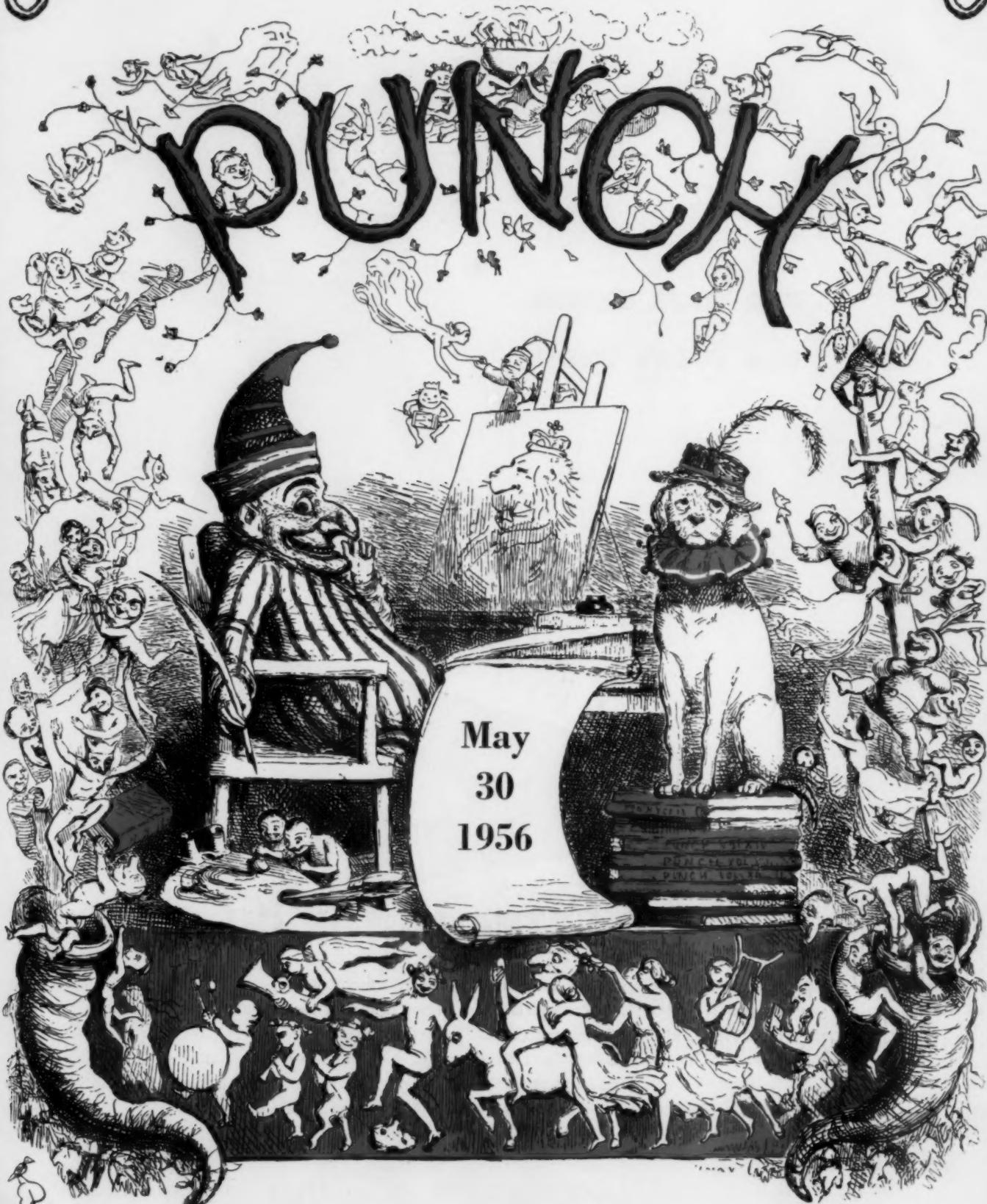


6d

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# PUNCH

May  
30  
1956



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**FOR YOUR ENGINE**  
**FOR EVERY ENGINE**



## ESSO EXTRA MOTOR OIL

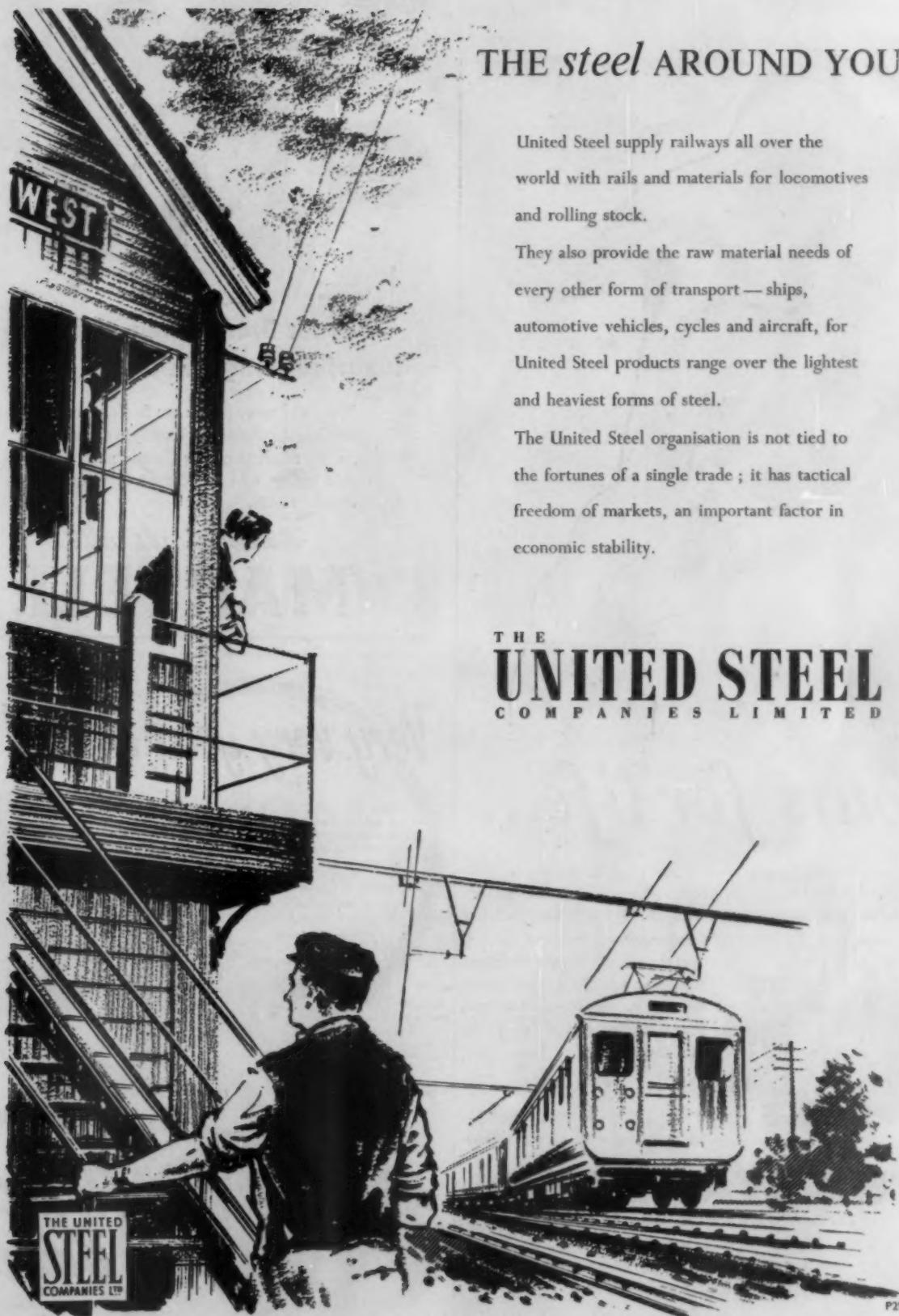
Whatever the make, the age or the condition of your car, new free-flowing Esso Extra Motor Oil gives *instant lubrication* at all temperatures, all the year round. This means that Esso Extra Motor Oil actually protects your engine throughout the entire working life built into it by the motor

manufacturer. You enjoy quick-starting, smoother motoring straight away reduced upkeep costs and prolonged engine life.

Change now to new Esso Extra Motor Oil—recommended by leading car manufacturers—and on sale at Esso Dealers everywhere.



**EXTRA MOTOR OIL** *protects your engine for life!*



## THE *steel* AROUND YOU

United Steel supply railways all over the world with rails and materials for locomotives and rolling stock.

They also provide the raw material needs of every other form of transport — ships, automotive vehicles, cycles and aircraft, for United Steel products range over the lightest and heaviest forms of steel.

The United Steel organisation is not tied to the fortunes of a single trade ; it has tactical freedom of markets, an important factor in economic stability.

THE  
**UNITED STEEL**  
COMPANIES LIMITED

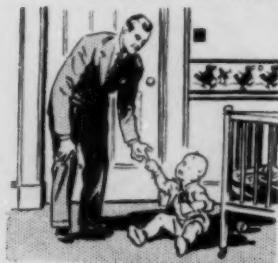
THE UNITED  
**STEEL**  
COMPANIES LTD



## Yours for life...

Your son—or is he a daughter?—may not yet be in the toddler class, but there will be school bills to pay one day (that is what fathers are for).

To help you with the expense, the Standard's Public Schools Policy sensibly spreads much of the cost over the years before the youngster goes off to school for the first time. Whether you live to see that or not, your educational plans can still be carried out.



Write for 'Yours for Life', a free booklet explaining most of our policies.

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More and more people are finding a new and very special pleasure in Brandy as a long drink. At the smartest parties, in the most hospitable homes, Mr. Brandyman introduces just the right note.

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Very, very good shoes!

Made with pride from rich, supple leather which is a joy to handle. Styled with the utmost restraint—yet with abounding comfort. The craftsmen behind these magnificent shoes understand feet as well as shoemaking. It pays to buy very, very good shoes... every time. Health Brand styles are available from 79/11 upwards.

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Available in  
Brown or  
Black Calf and  
in Brown or  
Ginger Suede.  
Price

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CVS-69



## the things they say!



My goodness, he's shifting!

*But where's all this speed going to end? And where are we going  
to get the materials to stand up to it?*

Some of them are just around the corner, some are already helping  
— titanium, for example.



*What's special about titanium?*

You can make alloys of titanium that are as strong as high-tensile steel,  
but only half the weight — and weight, as you know, is a critical matter  
today to people like the designers of Flying Bedsteads and the flying machines of the future.



*Why haven't we had titanium before, then?*

It's not so easy to make. For example, molten titanium attacks all the usual furnace  
linings, and if air got at it during the melting, the metal would be brittle.

*Have these problems been overcome now?*

Largely, yes. I.C.I. have developed a process for extracting raw titanium  
on a large scale. And they've built a plant at Wilton, in North Yorkshire,  
that's producing the metal at the rate of 1,500 tons a year.



*So titanium has really arrived?*

Not merely arrived. I.C.I.'s wrought titanium products are already playing  
a useful part in the aircraft industry.

Your wisest choice  
for top performance,  
luxurious comfort and value...

Compare the performance of the Pathfinder, its 110 brake horse-power, its top speed of well over 100 m.p.h. Compare the roominess; it seats six at their ease yet it will go into the average garage. Compare the advanced design of suspension—torsion bars at the front and coil springs at the rear; the power-assisted brakes; the floor-level right hand gear change that is such a delight to use. Compare all that the Pathfinder offers and then compare the price. You'll agree that Riley is your wisest choice.

For Magnificent Motoring

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plus  
£471.7.0  
P.T.



the brilliant 

*Pathfinder*



B.M.C. Service in Europe  
—Riley owners planning a Continental Tour are invited to see their Riley Dealer for details of a free service to save foreign currency.

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You're right on  
the button with  
**COOPER'S**



**FRESH-aire**

This Cooper air-freshener is a 'must' in every home! A puff's enough to end smells of cooking, stale smoke and other unwanted odours instantly when you press the button. Price 5/3.



**MOTH-aire**

Here's a mothproofer that really kills moths and their grubs! One spraying with lavender-perfumed MOTH-aire gives up to 12 MONTHS protection for your stored clothes and furnishings. Prove it for yourself! Price 5/6, 9/6.



No fuss! No mess! Just press!

When you're invaded by flies, wasps or mosquitoes, don't retreat—press forward with Cooper's Household Aerosol! In next to no time the enemy will be down and dying—because Cooper's Household Aerosol is formulated with

'Pyrethrum', the

safe, super-efficient insecticide containing African pyrethrum synergised with piperonyl butoxide. It's non-poisonous—you can even spray it in the larder—and non-inflammable too. A little goes a very long way—try it!

Price 5/6, 10/6.



Cooper, McDougall  
and Robertson Ltd.  
Berkhamsted, Herts.  
Est'd 1943

Wonders alone are no longer enough!

# Double Diamond adds brightness to lightness—

AND WORKS WONDROUS WONDERS!

Millions have proved it—  
read what they say

BEER drinkers everywhere have long realised that something was lacking in their favourite drink. The wonders it worked were ordinary.

NOW—Double Diamond adds brightness to lightness—and works *wondrous* wonders (i.e. wonders more wonderful than wonders!) Yes, it's really true! An exciting, exciting fact. Millions are proving it every day.

No longer need you be content with a beer that merely puts you on the bright side. Double Diamond makes you *brighter* than bright. Bright, bright, brighter than you've ever been! Dullards become positively *brilliant!!* What is more, Double Diamond is so kind to your *digestion!!!*

IT'S AMAZING!  
DOUBLE DIAMOND  
REALLY DOES WORK  
WONDROUS WONDERS!

AND JUST THINK—IT COSTS  
NO MORE TO ENJOY  
DOUBLE DIAMOND'S  
WONDROUS WONDERS  
THAN ORDINARY WONDERS!



*'Before I changed to Double Diamond the day's work left me flat. All I wanted to do was sit around. Now I can stand a round with the best of them!'*



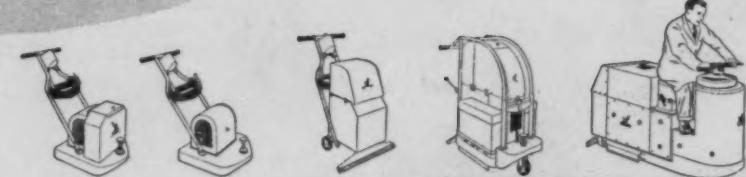
*'I thought wonders were a thing of the past', reported another beer drinker, 'until the day I went for a drink with a neighbour. We decided to try a Double Diamond. After his very first glass he felt so wonderfully wonderful that he bought me another!'*



**OMO** for brighter whites—  
**DOUBLE DIAMOND** for brighter nights!



*...and the unanimous decision,  
gentlemen, is that we should  
consult **Matling**  
on this floor  
cleansing problem!*



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After prolonged development and testing between the Daimler Co., Limited and Lodge Plugs Limited, the Lodge CLNH plug is now fitted as standard in all Daimler cars.

The Lodge CLNH plug (set to '025" gap) gives complete satisfaction throughout the wide performance range covered by these lively engines.

in your Daimler—fit **LODGE**  
THE POWER PLUG



LODGE PLUGS LTD., RUGBY

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F. H. BOURNER & CO. (ENGINEERS) LTD., Manor Royal, Crawley, Sussex



If you want  
hundreds of thousands of feet  
of steel tubes

Accles & Pollock have them

We are in trouble with the Directors again. In fact they are revolting (in a nice sort of way) because for a long time we haven't told you how good they are at producing hundreds of thousands of feet of ordinary carbon steel tubing to precise specification. We hereby give notice that tubes for refrigerators; tubes for diesel engine oil feed pipes; tubes for vacuum cleaners and such like are exactly Accles & Pollock's cup of tea— freshly made, straight from the pot, cold drawn but piping hot. If you'll wait till we wipe the draw-bench you could sit down and join us for a cup while we talk it over with you.



## Brush up your Shakespeare - 4



1 'Bring me a Brewmaster!' Was this said by—

- (a) Henry V on the field of battle?
- (b) Sir John Falstaff to a Merry Wife?
- (c) A man in a Flowers house with a fine taste in pale ales?



2 'To be or not to be, that is the question.'

- (a) can you suggest a sensible answer?
- (b) does it matter?

3 'O, how full of briars is this working-day world!' Was this said by—

- (a) a landgirl in a bramble patch?
- (b) Rosalind in *As you like it*?
- (c) A man who couldn't see his Flowers Bitter for tobacco smoke?

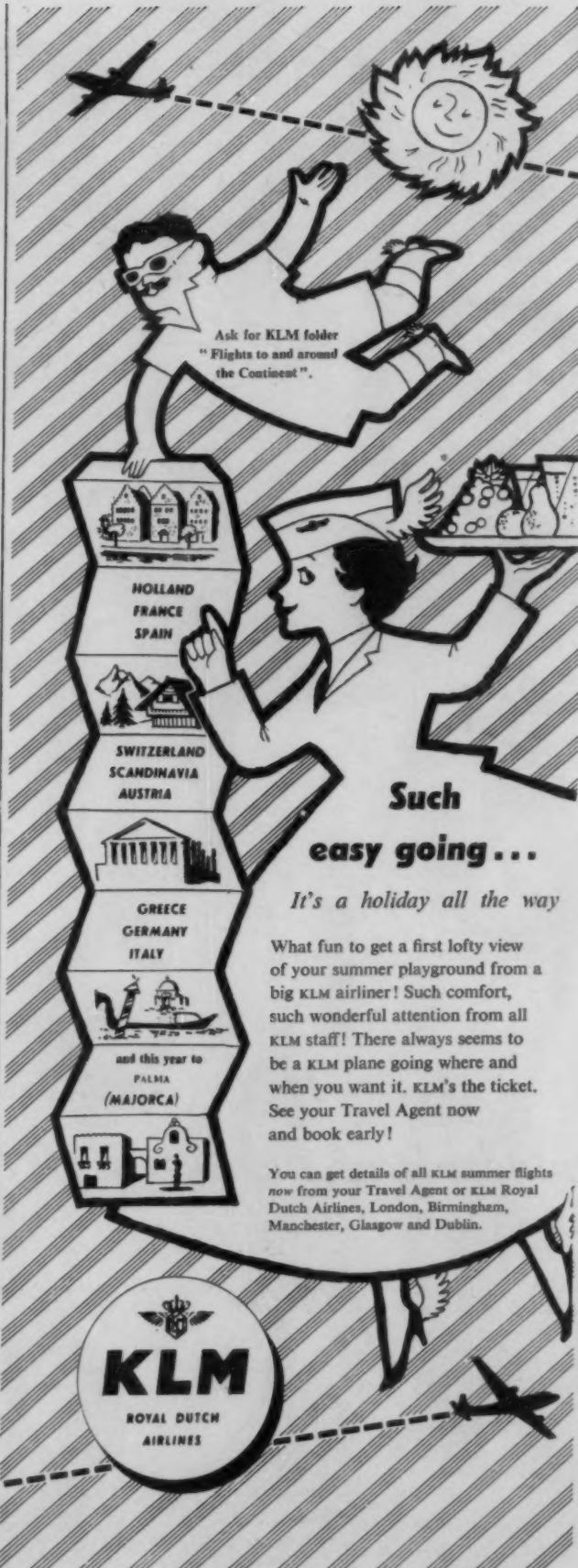
4 'Out, out brief candle.' Is this—

- (a) Macbeth lamenting the death of his wife?
- (b) A customer lamenting closing time at a Flowers house?

## Knock back your Flowers BITTER



BREWED BY FLOWERS OF STRATFORD-ON-AVON





*Mohair Coat & Jersey Hat  
by Jasper*

## BEAUTIFULLY FAST, THE AUSTIN HEALEY

This is an unusual picture. It shows an Austin Healey at rest; and that is one thing this magnificent sports car rarely is. For when you think of an Austin Healey, you think of beauty in action. You think of an immensely powerful sports car going ahead like streak lightning. You think of a speedometer that goes 70 . . . 80 . . . 90 . . . 100—and more. You think of the sheer excitement and exhilaration of being at the wheel of a record-breaker.

But the Austin Healey is not only beautiful to watch and beautiful to drive. The car itself is a beautiful engineering and design job. Its surging power comes from a superb 2.6 litre O.H.V. engine. Its wonderfully finished body is built on aerodynamic lines for speed. Its controls (one of the results of racing experience) are handily placed for sports driving. Its boot is particularly large for this kind of car. One final word. The upholstery is real leather, the carpeting is luxurious, the accessories are part and parcel of the standard equipment. Considering all this and the class of the car, the price of the Austin Healey is remarkably reasonable.



## AUSTIN HEALEY

The Austin Motor Company Limited, Longbridge, Birmingham



*Lucky man.....*

to have such a delicious breakfast put before him by a wife who must know how important this meal is. Lucky couple to have such a handsome collection of stainless steel to grace their table; some being wedding presents perhaps from knowing friends. What a difference she will find when it comes to the washing up. Stainless steel is so easy to keep clean—just a rinse in hot soapy water and a wipe with a cloth or leather.

"Staybrite" stainless steel is still as popular in the home today as it was twenty years ago, and many new and delightful articles are available.



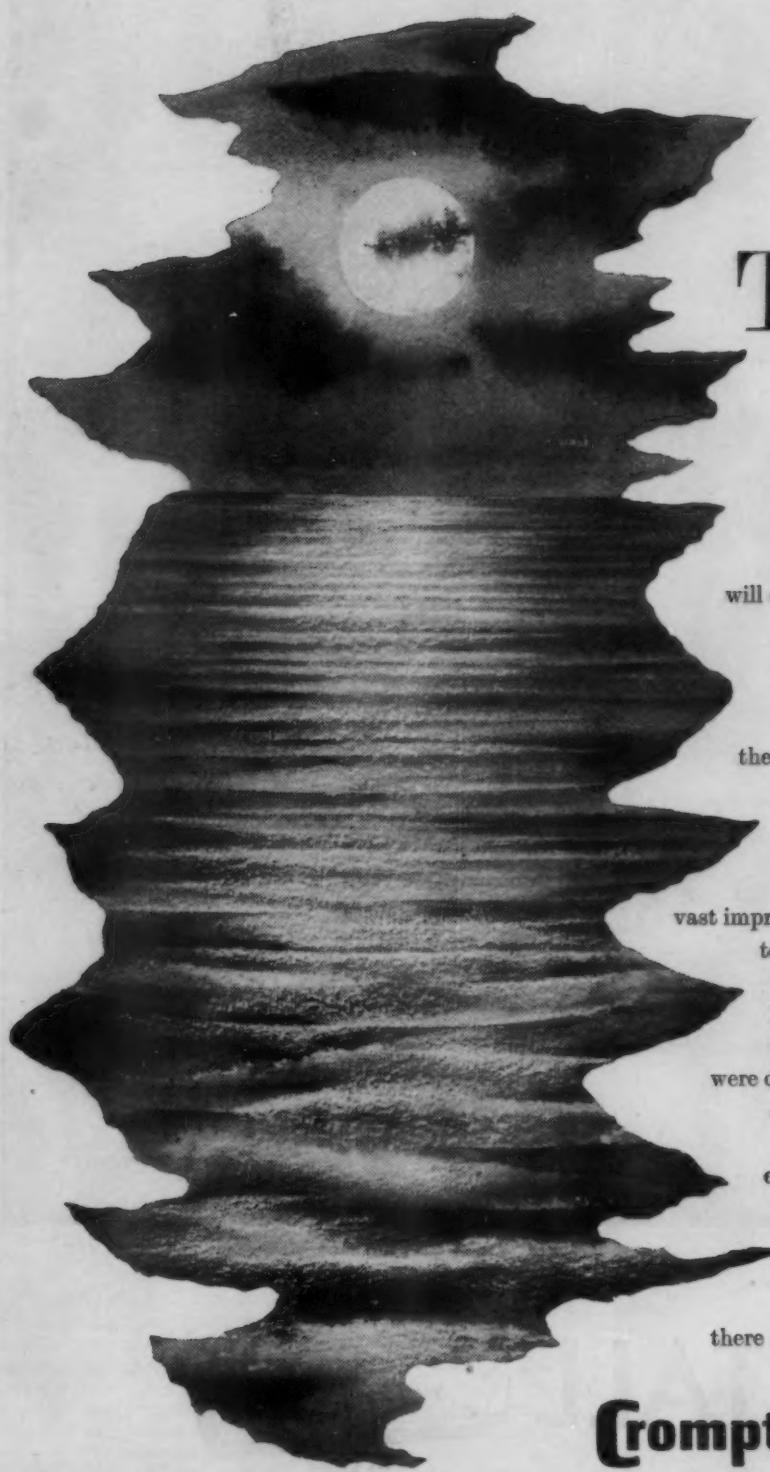
If you are unable to obtain just what you want, let us know and we will send a list of names and addresses that may help you.

FIRTH-VICKERS STAINLESS STEELS LTD - SHEFFIELD

Telephone: Sheffield 42051

SOURCES OF POWER

# The Tides



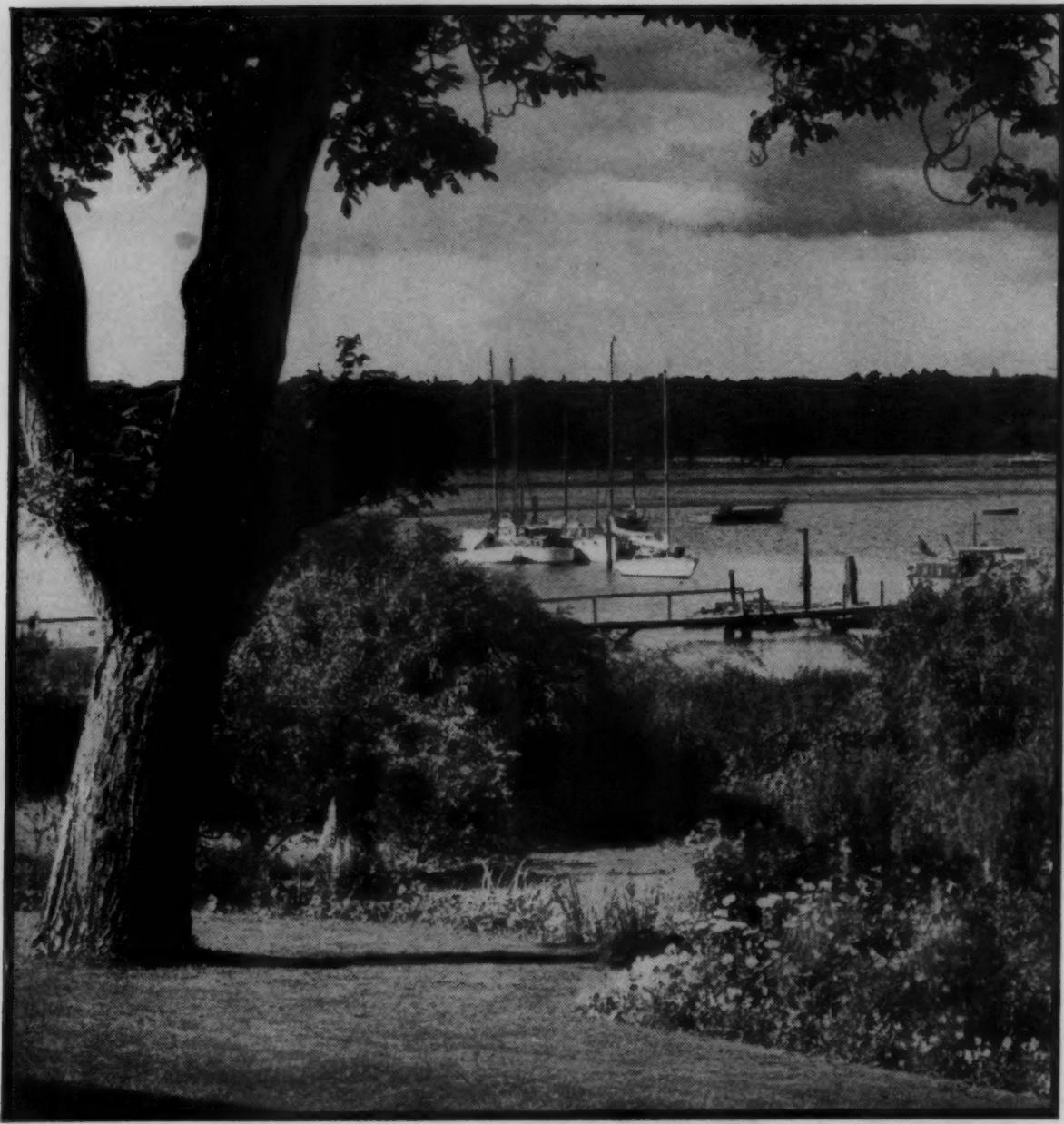
Man, who knows how small a stream will drive his mill or his loom, cannot but dream when he looks at those monstrous masses of moving water, the tides. Now that he knows how to turn water power into electricity, the notion of harnessing tidal power has grown into an obsession. "Only think," it reiterates. "Only think of unlimited power, at no fuel cost whatsoever!" Now, thanks to vast improvements in building and mechanical techniques, this ambitious dream may well be a fact of the near future. Before tidal power could be seriously considered, Crompton Parkinson were developing and making machines and equipment to conduct and moderate, measure and control electricity everywhere from the generator to the switch. And whatever means be used in the future to produce electrical power, Crompton Parkinson, still pioneers, will be there equipped to put it through its paces.

**Crompton Parkinson**  
LIMITED

MAKERS OF ELECTRIC MOTORS OF ALL KINDS • ALTERNATORS AND GENERATORS  
SWITCHGEAR • B.E.T. TRANSFORMERS • CABLES • INSTRUMENTS • LAMPS • LIGHTING EQUIPMENT  
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# CRITTALL

The sign of a  
well built house

## POSITIVELY RUSTPROOFED METAL WINDOWS

*There is a helpful booklet on metal windows available, and also, for gardeners, a leaflet (179a) on Crittall 'Cadet' greenhouses. Why not write today for either or both of these?*



THE CRITTALL MANUFACTURING CO LTD • BRAINTREE • ESSEX • BRANCHES AND DEPOTS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY

BBW10

# How one man helped British Ermeto with evaluation and control of stocks



Mr. S. A. Gardner (right), director and secretary of the British Ermeto Corporation, discusses their new system of stock accounting with Mr. F. Hook, the Burroughs expert. Based on two Burroughs typewriter calculating machines, this system led to important savings by giving more accurate and frequent stock figures.

THE British Ermeto Corporation specializes in high-pressure valves and couplings; markets them all over the world. With a rapidly growing business, the management decided last year that they needed more frequent and accurate interim accounts. The main difficulty was the evaluation and control of stock; millions of parts move through the factory every year.

Ermeto asked advice from Burroughs, who sent Mr. P. Hook, one of their experts on modern mechanized accounting, to look into the problem. He discussed it in detail with Mr. S. A. Gardner, director and secretary of Ermeto, and members of their accounting staff. The solution they found was based on two Burroughs typewriter calculating machines.

The new system involves standard costing of all items of stock. The machines give the amounts of stock, with both quantity and value. Figures are now produced in record time. And Ermeto have been able to

make considerable inventory savings in components and slow-moving raw materials. They are now installing some further Burroughs machines to handle production control.

Whatever your business, if you have an accounting problem, the Burroughs man can help you. He is an expert on modern accounting systems, and well able to work with your accountants or auditors. Backed by Burroughs' world-wide experience, he will make a full analysis and suggest the most economical, *workable* solution. If he thinks no change advisable, he will say so; if he does recommend a change he will make a detailed plan and help you get it working smoothly. Call in the Burroughs man—you're committed to nothing. His advice is free.

Burroughs make the world's widest range of business machines. You'll find your local Burroughs office in the telephone book.

Burroughs Adding Machine Ltd., 356-366 Oxford Street, London, W.1.

FOR SPECIALIST ADVICE ON MODERN ACCOUNTING METHODS

CALL IN THE **Burroughs** MAN



## G. & J. WEIR, LTD.

### RECORD NEW WORK AND REPAIRS

#### THE HON. J. KENNETH WEIR'S REVIEW

The 62nd Annual General Meeting of G. & J. Weir, Ltd., will be held on June 25 at Glasgow.

The following are extracts from the circulated statement by the Chairman, The Hon. J. Kenneth Weir, C.B.E., for the year 1955.

The company has now been operating for one year with the direction of the Executive Board. I am glad, therefore, to report that the output of new work and repairs created another record—a gratifying result achieved with the same manufacturing capacity as in 1954. While this increase in output reflects improved production efficiency, we continued to have the advantage of a fair proportion of repetitive work, although rather less than that which we have enjoyed during the past three years. A high proportion of the output was for export markets, deliveries to foreign shipbuilders, in particular, showing an improvement over 1954. Indeed our export performance compares very favourably with the exceptional year 1954, which benefited substantially through the shipment of the greater part of our large contract for Kuwait.

During the course of the year your Executive Board approved the final arrangement and layout of a new Test and Development Shop which will occupy a considerable part of the old Foundries. Designed to enable the very largest boiler feed pumps to be tested at full load, pressure and temperature, this shop will probably be the finest of its kind in the world. Provision will, of course, also be made for the testing and development of our other products such as evaporating and distilling plants, deaerators and other heat exchangers, pumps and compressors. Alongside the new Department will be our Research building—a three-storeyed structure fully equipped with all the necessary facilities for fundamental and shorter term research. Substantial progress has already been made in its construction.

#### DRYSDALE & CO., LIMITED

The constantly increasing size of the pumping units required for Power Stations, Graving Docks, etc., both at home and abroad necessitates extensions involving heavier buildings and plant to meet these requirements, and plans are well advanced and orders placed for dealing adequately with this side of the business.

The order book continues in a very satisfactory state, both on the Marine and on the Land sides, and it is pleasing to be able to record that the proportion of export work continues to be well maintained.

#### WEIR VALVES LIMITED

It can now be disclosed that during the past two years this company has been actively engaged on work for the United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority and has made a particularly valuable contribution to their requirements. Development of the company's products proceeds along satisfactory lines.

#### PROSPECTS AND OUTLOOK

Turning now to the input of new work, we have made a very good start indeed at Cathcart, and our normal orders continue to follow the upward trend which began in the late Autumn of 1955. Moreover, during the first quarter of this year the Parent Company received the largest individual contract in its history. This is for the supply of four large Evaporating and Distilling Plants for the Island of Aruba, Netherlands Antilles, and its value is approximately £1½ million sterling. This valuable and important addition to our orders was secured against strong International competition. At Yoker the trend of new orders is also encouraging, and the Housing Corporation equally report a good start to the year, as do the smaller units in the Group. Finally, current inquiries are at a healthy level and we feel that our order position should show a still further improvement in the next few months.

We are, therefore, in a stronger position than we were last year, and, although the prospects of the Housing Division are more obscure the outlook for the Engineering Companies in the Group seems definitely brighter. Of course, while a larger order book is undoubtedly encouraging, in the last resort it is mainly the cost of manufacture which determines whether our results will improve or worsen. Recent wage awards in the Engineering Industry—particularly the most recent—dearer and scarcer raw materials and finished components and dearer services are all factors which inevitably force our costs upwards.

Unless, therefore, unexpected contingencies supervene, there seems no reason why we should not continue to give a good account of ourselves.



## ROVER REVIEWED

JOHN EASON GIBSON, leading British motoring writer had this to say of the Rover in *Country Life* (1.3.56).

"The Rover is one of those cars to which one becomes more and more attached as the miles are covered . . . it combines, to an unusual extent, comfort, silence, performance and economy. Allied to these qualities is an outstanding impression of refinements, sadly lacking in so many modern cars. A stranger to the car would be surprised at finding out how high an average speed he was maintaining without having made any conscious effort to drive fast."

THE AUTOCAR (23.9.55), summed up Rover quality as follows :

"No other manufacturer in the price range could justly claim a higher standard of workmanship, of good taste or of mechanical refinement on the road."

# ROVER

ONE OF BRITAIN'S FINE CARS

*The range includes the famous 90, the 75 and the 2-litre 60*

THE ROVER COMPANY LIMITED • SOLIHULL • WARWICKSHIRE also DEVONSHIRE HOUSE • LONDON

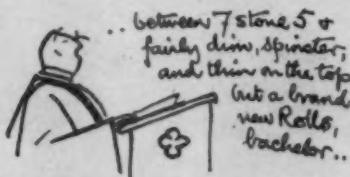


## CHARIVARIA

THAT old problem of how to soak the holidaymaker to the maximum is already cropping up again round our coasts, and Cleethorpes and Skegness have just made their seasonal assault on the accuracy of official weather forecasts. Though Scarborough has no complaints on this score—possibly because forecasts of Flamborough area sunshine are attracting eager thousands when it turns out in fact to be sleet—it has issued a strongly-worded warning to motorists saying that they aren't wanted unless they spend money. These difficulties should not be belittled. But what is to be done? Cleethorpes is getting round the weather question by appointing its own forecaster, a local night-watchman with reliable prophetic gifts, and this may be the answer. If Scarborough and Cleethorpes can, in their respective ways, create their own climate of welcome, other resorts should be able to follow suit. Failing that, it's just a matter of a competitive struggle for Conferences. May the best P.R.O. win.

### Angles and Curves

READERS of both *The Times* and the *Daily Mirror* last Wednesday are still not sure which treatment of that



Florence ceremony pleased them most—"Marriage of Mr. Anthony Steel" over a four-line report, or "39½-37 Weds 6 ft. 1 ins." over a front page picture including a *Mirror* representative as best man.

### Kindness Itself

LIMITATIONS of space make it impossible to comment on (or even list) all the

Russian delegations at present streaming through British factories, power-stations, housing estates and other objects of national pride, but it should at least be noted that Mr. A. I. Ezhov, leader of one of them, said in a farewell speech that his party had been much impressed with the efficiency of our road and rail services. This should dispel any lingering doubts about the Russians' sincere desire to be friends.

### Happy Release

SLOUGH is by this time well-known for its enlightened road safety experiments, and its residents must count themselves fortunate in having every



kind of precaution operating on their very doorsteps. The latest move to impose a 20 m.p.h. speed limit on eleven of the town's roads may be less popular, however: on fine week-ends there may be an influx of motorists from the main traffic-streams, converging on Slough for a cathartic burst of speed.

### Absent Friends

IT is hard to work up real enthusiasm over news that the California Institute of Technology has produced a report on the world's needs in 2056—beyond reflecting that it won't need us.

### Pas Seul

IT seems rather surprising that no Further Education authority has started courses in celebrity, which is so rapidly becoming a vocation in itself. Despite this lack, however, a body of required techniques is slowly accumulating, and students on the alert for useful hints

should have seized on the recent comment, by a friend of Miss Violetta Elvin, that she "has always been a mysterious person. She thinks her private life is her own."

### Keep Death Off the Platform

No one will deny that, here or elsewhere, the science of propaganda should be given free rein against the plague of road accidents. But Americans in certain quarters are said to be disquieted by a Republican Party campaign slogan saying "Drive carefully—the life you save may vote Republican." They think it may have an undesirable effect on Democrat drivers.

### Nothing to Strike With

MR. FOULKES of the E.T.U. put a pertinent point when he asked "Why should we work if the machines can do it for us?" But it seems odd that no one pointed out how hard it is to down tools when you aren't holding any.

### Make it a Big Slice

DIVORCE cakes are now to be had from a sophisticated New York bakery,



said to be very much like the more familiar wedding cake "but with just one figure on top." It is believed that a girl who goes to sleep with a piece under her pillow will dream the amount of her alimony.

### Next, Grand Gardening Article

THERE seems a good chance that the national press has at last exhausted its invention in the field of circulation-promoting gimmicks. After a desperate

throw with the invitation for readers' tales of their previous incarnations the *Daily Express* virtually withdrew from the field: even after regrouping and re-equipping it has returned with only an improved crossword puzzle.

#### Vox Populi

JOHN THOMAS STRAFFEN, at present in Horfield Prison, Bristol, is the subject of an eleven-thousand signature petition from Bristol people asking for him to be transferred elsewhere. It is not known what attitude the Home Secretary is supposed to adopt when faced with so impressive an expression of public feeling, but a diplomatic course would be to move the prisoner to some smaller community, where fewer signatures could be raised. The British public is always open to reason, and audited statistics of protest figures, on display at the Home Office, should soon prove to future petition-organizers that justice is being done.

#### Down With Regimentation

THE forthcoming public meeting of The Peoples League for the Defence of Freedom is bound to draw an interested crowd, particularly from recipients of the League's publicity material who see nothing odd in item one of the prospectus:

"On joining, a Member  
(a) Receives an official number . . ."

#### Traveller's Return

GAITSKELL, back across the dyke,  
Boasts a broadened view:  
Adds the slogan "I like Ike"  
To that of "I love Hugh."



"Now that they've played Yorkshire and Surrey, Ian Johnson's apparently decided to try to win a game."



## EQUATORIAL COMPOST

OTING of sorts has been since time began,  
Coeval with the memory of Man.  
When the old Jews, athirst for planned economy,  
Decided (so we read in Deuteronomy)

To count their numbers, by express direction  
The Lord Jehovah quashed the whole election.

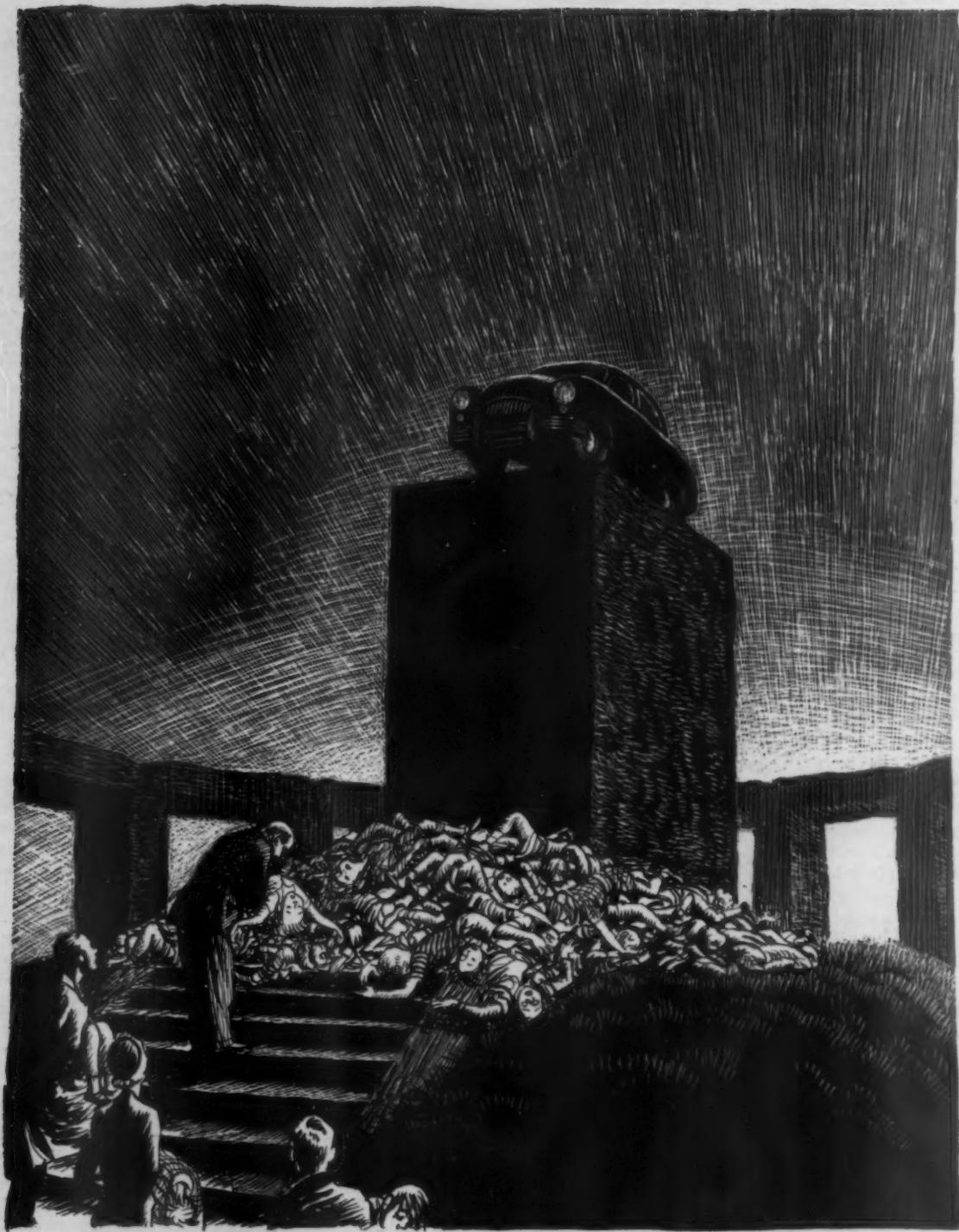
The franchise generally throughout the ages  
Has grown and grown by slow and stately stages,  
And older States have somehow jogged along  
And seen the voting didn't go too wrong.  
Voting, we told ourselves, was at its best  
In certain favoured nations of the West.  
The ballot-box well suits the Occidental,  
But east of Suez Man grows temperamental,  
And darker types, less self-controlled than we,  
Get on far best without Democracy.

Now that's all changed, and in the modern clime  
They're voting, voting, voting all the time.  
The table of new Sinai's revelation  
Is dedicated to self-determination.

Mankind from Eskimo to Cherokee  
At last in every nation shall be free,  
And the new gospel's Dead Sea Scrolls present  
The right divine of Fifty-one per cent.  
The Ten Commandments have no more authority  
Unless they're voted for by a majority,  
To-day, twice two is five, they'd have you know,  
Should but the voters choose to make it so.

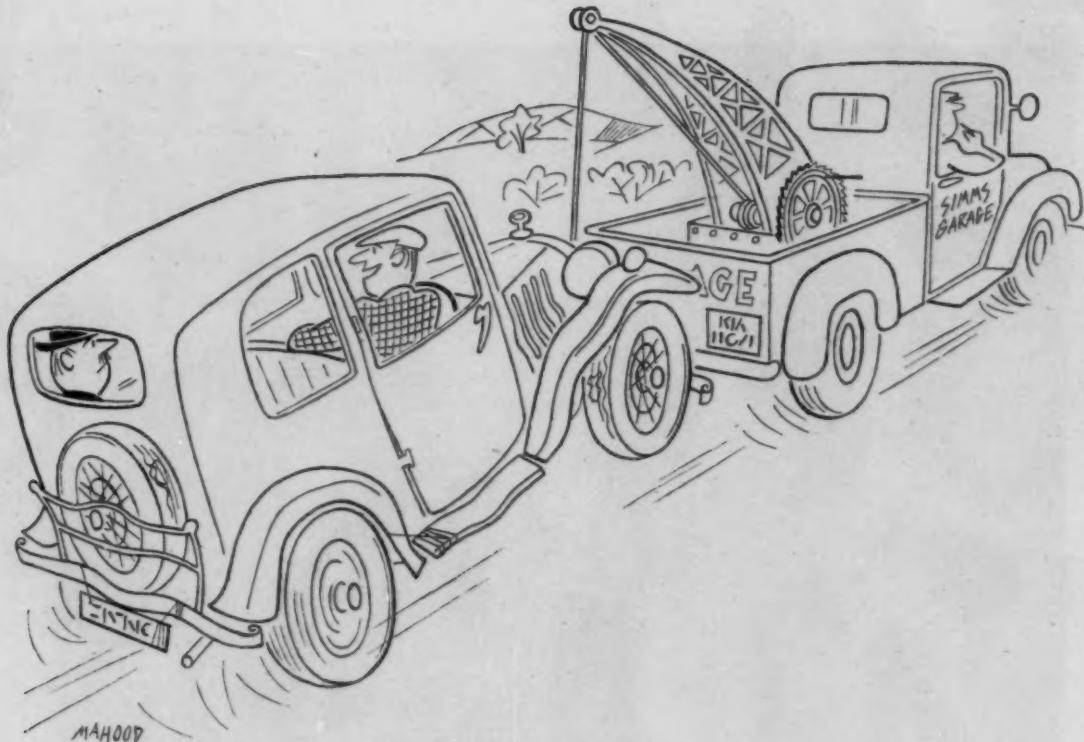
There always is a sad and secret room  
Where it is settled Who does What to Whom,  
Where the real, rigorous game is truly played  
And where the right majority is made.  
And those who do not like must lump it still.  
No Democrat may flout the People's Will.  
Nothing on earth has proved a greater bore  
Than moving Eatanswill to Singapore,  
Where Freedom's cause, majestic and impartial,  
Now stands enshrined in Mr. David Marshall.  
The modern formula appears to be,  
Invent a nation first, then set it free.  
Mix Indian, Chinese, Burman and Malay,  
A Cingalese to keep the rain away,  
A touch of Lascar and a pinch of houri,  
And that is how in this rough island's story  
They make what you may call a Singaporee.  
For Singapore, where traders come and go,  
Is what the Frenchmen call an *entrepôt*,  
And who shall say (to sooth the sad Dissenters)  
What is an *entrepôt* which no one enters?  
Ballots, not bullets, is the slogan there.  
The British aren't allowed to interfere,  
Save in Emergency, when they have got  
The Special Privilege of Being Shot.

CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS



## THE SACRIFICE

During the year ended March, 1956, deaths and injuries on the road totalled 274,894, of which 49,301 were children.



*"It's old and shabby and decrepit, but it gets me there just the same."*

## Eat More Germs

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

S TATISTICIANS leave few stones unturned, but so far as I know they haven't yet searched under any to discover how many World War II babies can see in the dark. It will be recalled that these were the babies who for years were stuffed to bursting with carrots, because of Government assurances that a fighter-pilot's penetrating night vision was due to a prodigious carrot intake. These assurances, repeated until all surplus stocks of carrots had been got rid of, must have made a hell of countless babyhoods; but child memories are fleeting, and to-day there can't be more than a dozen youths who go out regularly on moonless nights and run themselves headlong into trees and other obstacles, still hopeful that their vegetable privations of long ago may yet, so to speak, bear fruit.

The point is that no one ever told them, officially, that night vision and the carrot are not associated; and it seems to me that when a Government

imposes a state of artificial behaviour on the taxpayer, it should at least have the civility to announce its formal termination when its (i.e. the Government's) ends have been served. A short Press release saying that it had been a pack of lies would meet the case.

But how often is this small courtesy observed? True, when Sir Stafford Cripps said that the pound would never be devalued he brought the deception to a speedy conclusion by devaluing it almost immediately, but this was a rare case. Ordinarily a Minister treats a propaganda move like an election poster: a vigorous organization gets it slapped up, but there's no one to tear it down when the long trick's over. His attitude is like that of the café proprietor who hangs an "OPEN" sign in his window whether he is open or not. If he is, it entices the customer; if he isn't, and starving citizens come pounding on his bolted door, that's their funeral. Why should he worry?

For uninformed millions the carrot is still a sure thing for seeing in the dark, just as orange-juice is a guarantee of sturdy health—in spite of recent suggestions that it was all a tale invented by go-ahead salesmen in the orange-juice business.

There are times, of course, when exigencies of policy force the propagandist's hand not only to arrest an induced behaviour progression but to reverse it. An example may well be just round the corner at this moment, in the matter of milk. At present the nation is ankle-deep in milk, and through television advertising the housewife is being urged to give her loved ones milk until it runs out of their ears; a short educational film even shows the trick of slipping an increased order into the neck of an empty. But any time now there may be a dairymaids' strike, or a cow shortage: then where will the Milk Marketing Board be? Round at the advertising agent's, hurriedly redrafting

the blurb to bring out milk's fattening, uglifying, non-nutritive and frankly tubercular properties.

At least Sir Anthony Eden's organization is to be commended for dealing in a proper and honourable manner with the latest of these affairs. I refer to the teasing problem of White Bread *v.* Brown. As is well known, the nation has for about seven years been under the impression that the succulent white loaf contained no more nourishment than the average inflatable beach bed, whereas the mud-coloured "national" or subsidized loaf was the veritable staff of life. We are now told that this was all a silly mistake: there isn't a calorie to choose between them. Such an admission is in the finest tradition of British political straight-dealing. Even if the White Paper bearing the good news was issued with a stealth verging on the surreptitious, at least it was issued, and any tax-payer who knows of its existence can go and get a copy, if he knows where to get one, and can take it home and read it, and try to make sense of it, and

break the news, around his own domestic hearth, that the coarse, gritty, unpalatable slabs of muck which his family have been manfully gulping down for so long, in the belief that they were paving the highroad to health, might just as well have been lovely, smooth white bread all the time, and not a ricket in sight.

Breaking the news will call for diplomacy. His may be a highly conscientious household, where the children have been trained to the creed that white bread is sinful, and that the children next door, notorious white-bread eaters, are wicked and fleshly. How does a parent act in the circumstances?

Fortunately, he has faced the problem before. Only last year, when distinguished medical opinion, after exhaustive research, exploded that superstition about sweets being bad for the teeth, he had to assemble the little ones at his knee. "Your mother and I," he told them, "have been lying to you all this time. Sweeties are good for

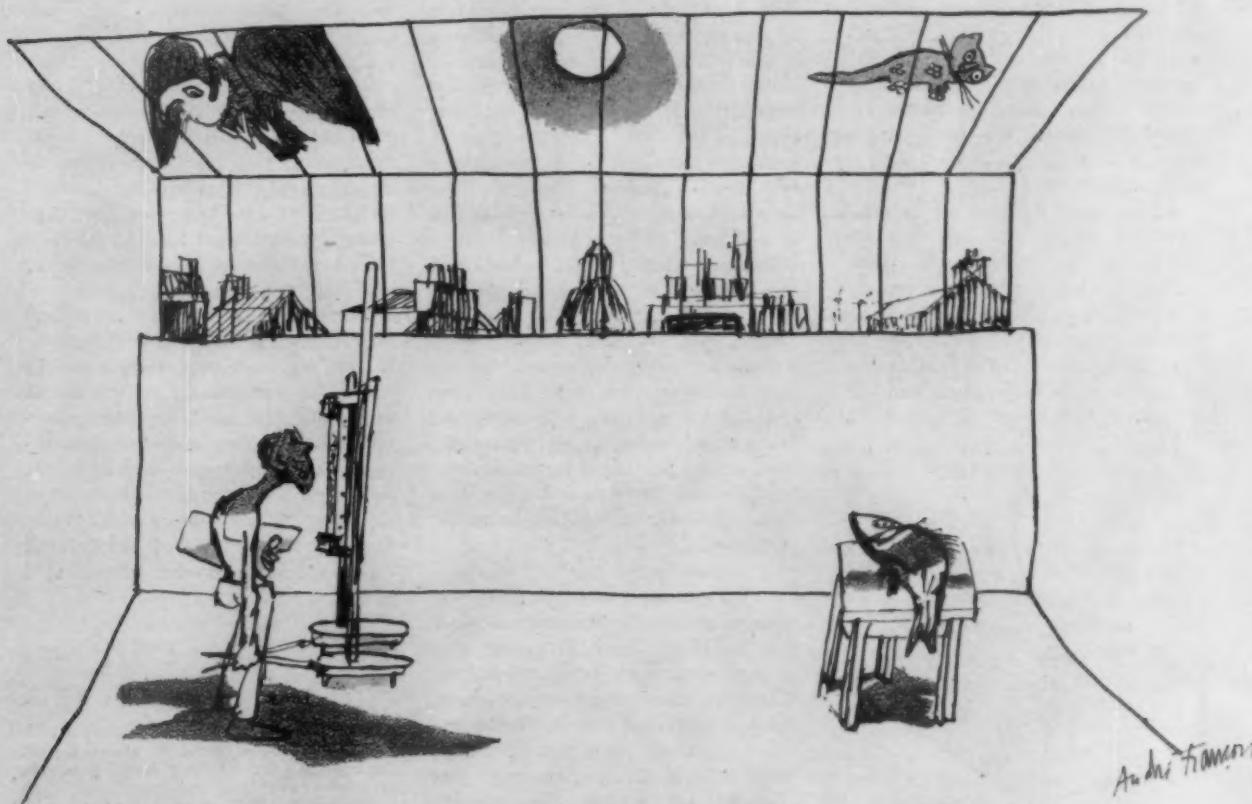
the teeth. Eat all you want." So he ought to manage this bit of bread trouble all right.

And as time goes on, and occasions multiply, it will get easier still. When a man has stuck close to expert opinions all his life, from carrots-for-cat's-eyes to Admiralty fables about frogmen, he takes everything in his stride—even including such trivial side-issues as the modern glorification of glucose, when in his young days a treacle tin stiffly labelled "No Glucose" was the autocrat of the breakfast table. He becomes shockproof. In the end a Ministry of Health announcement recommending wet feet as a sure safeguard against rheumatism will scarcely agitate his hardened old eyebrow.

2 2

"Second best were St. Peter's, West Blatchington, Drama Group, with their production of Shaw's *Dark Lady of the Summit*."—*News Chronicle*

Should have come top.



# The Liverpool Indicator

By FRANK SHAW

**I**N a place like Liverpool, without any upper class as far as one can see, and now that the working class has been abolished everywhere, one would not expect to find class distinctions. One would expect the situation to be, as ship stewards described the pre-war cheap cruises, All One Class No Class. One would be wrong.

Distinction by money not applying, duality is attained by a division—rough of course as all sociological classifications must be, ignoring the duchess who says Pardon, and the shopgirl who uses writing paper—into those who like scouse and those who do not. Actually everybody (almost) likes scouse. Some admit it. Some do not. Scouse, by the way, is a seaman's stew (cp. the Scandinavian lobsouse, Midland lobby, Smollett's Lobs-course) which, especially in its "blind" or meatless form, has old associations with poverty. Like other poor man's dishes, such as spare-ribs and salt-fish, it is now as dear as any other.

Regardless then of income or where one lives or background generally, admission to liking scouse is the method we have used for cutting the community in two without which life would be a deadly monotone. We would have no one to look down on or, contrariwise, to sneer at and envy.

At one time, working for the Pools formed a similar division. But now almost everyone works for the Pools.

Another method of division has died in Liverpool as elsewhere—the use of the dearer part of the pub. Since the war it is not surprising to find convention-bred poppies in duffle coats and tight trousers in bars where the veriest drab

would formerly not have ventured; and, contrariwise again, the Pools clerk or foreman from the docks sipping his penny-a-pint-dearer ale is quite likely to have his bowler hat knocked sideways by a coalheaver's shovel or his elbow jogged by a tram conductor.

The boundary line of the existing classification is elastic. There are those such as publicans, bookmakers and undertakers who take money indiscriminately from S and non-S elements who are—even if they loudly announce a fondness for scouse—automatically accepted as non-S, and this elevation extends even to close associates such as the First Man in the pub or the senior bookie's runner. Such, whether in spit-and-sawdust or parlour, will, of an evening, have free drinks thrust upon them from those whose money they take as if they were pawnbrokers or members of the housing committee.

I have even witnessed a promotion on the field when an ordinary barman became, through the cowardice of the First Man, an honorary non-S though he continued not only to go out daily to a nearby cocoa-rooms for a lunch of scouse but openly announced on his return that he had had "a dirty big plate" of the stuff. The circumstances were exceptional. A third class pantryman from a Western Ocean boat, a former scouse-lover himself but now able to speak glibly of the most exotic dishes in kitchen French, had insulted the landlord by suggesting that he should fill the glasses. While the First Man stood impotent the confessed scouse-eater intervened and pitched the steward into the dock road. He at once received the accolade. In numerous dockside pubs, however, during the next week quite a few stewards were clouted by ambitious barmen, and once by a mere cellarboy, without any alteration to the social structure.

It is possible to step out of the S class by marriage—as when the Co-op manager marries a bookmaker's daughter—or by giving birth to young who, through some such environmental influence as employment by the Pools, will drag you out of your lower class and before you know where you are you are eating shepherd's pie, having your "carrying out" wrapped in a serviette

and doing the garden while Mam (now Mum) is forced to discard her comfortable shawl and linsey petticoats.

The reader may now be interested in a brief list of speech habits and other *mores* which, if he visits Liverpool, will give him clues as to the class of people he may meet. (But see above for roughness of demarcation and remember a non-S may, as a joke, affect S language or habits).

It is S when you push your mouth containing an unlit cigarette into the face of a passer-by whose cigarette is lit, and he obliges, to say "Ta." Non-S people simply wag the head.

It is S either to apologize when giving a large coin for a small fare to a bus-conductor or to say, if given by him a large number of coppers: "They'll do for church."

It is S to eat your chips from their paper on the main road. Non-S folk use side streets.

It is non-S to clean your own windows. (The visitor might expect it to be the other way about. That's just where he's caught.)

Definitely (pronounced by S fellows "defanely") non-S locutions are "Long time no see," "Pleased to meet you" (S is "How do, whack"), "Who d'you think you're pushing?" (usually said to S individuals), "Here's looking at you" (S "I paid for the last, whack"), "Age before beauty" when opening the door for a lady. Best clothes on Sunday is, above all, the clearest S indicator.

There is, however, always something kept back. It is very hard to cross over. Myself, my whole temperament shrieks out to be declassed. I am the son of unquestionably non-S parents. Elsewhere it is so easy to sell one's birth-right. A mere matter of having—or not having—a TV or car or telephone; even of asking for the lavatory in Knowsley Hall. It's killing me. I simply can't digest scouse however much of it I gollop.

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## Pas de Quatre

"In slacks and sweater at Chequers with an occasional twirl round the walled garden for exercise, Sir Anthony keeps a private secretary and two telephone operators briskly on the go."—*Sunday Express*





# We English

By WALTER ALLEN

**I**T is a strange thing to be an American," Mr. Archibald MacLeish's words, not mine; and who am I to contradict him? After all, he is one. All I know, as I sit here, in the middle of the Middle West and read the columnists, the magazine ads and *Time* ("Ah, sunflower weary of *Time*," as William Blake said), is that it seems pretty rum ("[Chiefly British], odd; strange; queer"—*Webster's New World Dictionary*) to be an Englishman.

The first rum thing is that we have a queen, though generally we have a king. Both are not merely rum but reprehensible. Most Americans are too polite to say so openly, but our local columnist is very forthright about it. "As a rule, you can count on me," he wrote boldly the other day, "being on the side of anyone who chides royalty. The business of curtseying, walking backwards, and generally behaving in a servile manner to a group of palace dudes, is ridiculous in the year 1956." There's a fine scorn about that that I like. How much more in accordance with the dignity of man to shout "Hi, Mamie!" and thump Mrs. Eisenhower in the back. He makes his point: "The entire royal set-up is incongruous."

Because we have a queen (though generally a king) we also have lords. Lords are very comic. Offhand, I can think of only two lords who haven't been comic: the late Lord Keyes and the present Lord Montgomery. A lot of us English are lords, and we can't pull

the wool over our local columnist's eyes. This time he's marrying off Princess Margaret—he went for Group-Captain Townsend in a big way because he wasn't a lord:

M'Lord is tall and droopy and has that almost complete lack of chin which is so characteristic of the avid rabbit-hunter. He has the added charm of being languid, too, and it is said that few men in England are as gracious as he in serving kippers, eggs and kedgeree from a chafing dish . . .

After M'Lord, I rather fancy the Earl of What's-His-Name. He comes from good blood, even if he doesn't have much. He can trace his round, drooping shoulders clear back to the Battle of Hastings, and in Mayfair they say he is positively the only blade of the lot who never, never fails to slip in a fresh cut boutonnière in his pajama lapel before falling off to sleep. Effete, you see: that's we English when we're lords. But what about those of us who are not lords? A few of us, of course, are ballet dancers at Sadler's Wells, and one of us is Mr. Alec Guinness. But a great many of us are butlers: you can see us in the ads, behaving very servilely but full of sound advice on Scotch. If we're female English, then it's quite likely we're nannies: we look after the lords' children—all those blunt little blades—and repeat grimly, "Wool next to the skin."

Most of us, if we're not lords, butlers or nannies, are Cockneys. Cockneys are the Lower Orders and very jolly; but also, of course, very rum. This comes out particularly in the way we speak. We tear round London Town

saying things like this: "Time I got back to the old trouble-and-strife. Thanks for the pig's ear. Anybody seen my titter?" That last one always trips them.

Those of us who don't live in London, hanging round Buckingham Palace and walking backwards, live in the English countryside, in half-timbered cottages roofed with thatch that nestle under the shadow of Stoke Poges Church. The English countryside is a rolling country of lush meadows, slow-moving streams, hopfields and Welsh mountains. Nearly every day a Highland piper may be seen wandering through it, skirling, as we call it, and walking backwards from a cricket match being played on the village green, which the rest of us are watching with gin-and-tonics in our hand. It is in the half-timbered cottages, under the thatch, that we ply the cottage industries for which we are famous: weaving tweed, knitting Kashmir sweaters, distilling whisky, making jets.

Rum in ourselves, our habits too are rum. "Almost every day, Englishmen warm the blood against the ague from damps and dews simply by savouring a glass or two of"—well, not to put too fine a point on it, of port. I have this on the authority of a well-known English wine-merchant. In his advertisement he notes another instance of English rumness. "In the country of the King's English, where Cholmondeley is pronounced 'Chumley' and Marjoribanks 'Marchbanks,' and Wriothesley 'Riley'



..." The wine-merchant is establishing the fact that his name is not spoken as written. Nor is mine. It's spelt A-l-l-e-n, but from time immemorial it's been pronounced Oppenheimer. It's what you'd expect of a chap who, almost every day, warms his blood against ague from damps and dews simply by savouring a glass or two of port.

A typical Englishman is Winston Churchill. Another typical Englishman was Dylan Thomas. We are a stuffy people, conventional and highly formal. We do not speak unless spoken to, and we resent being spoken to. We love pageantry, which we watch all day on television, and we are wedded to our traditions, such as Swan-upping, the Changing of the Guard and Ye Olde National Health Service. We're also, as another columnist reminds me, pretty crude chaps. We do not, like the Americans, inquire modestly for the rest-room, or even more modestly, as the Mexicans do, say "*Donde esta el excusado?*" Ah no. "Where," we bawl in our rough island way—"where is the W.C.?"

We are also a disloyal people. Having put Sir Anthony Eden into power, we criticize him. This is tampering with Anglo-American relations and playing strait into the hands of the Russians.

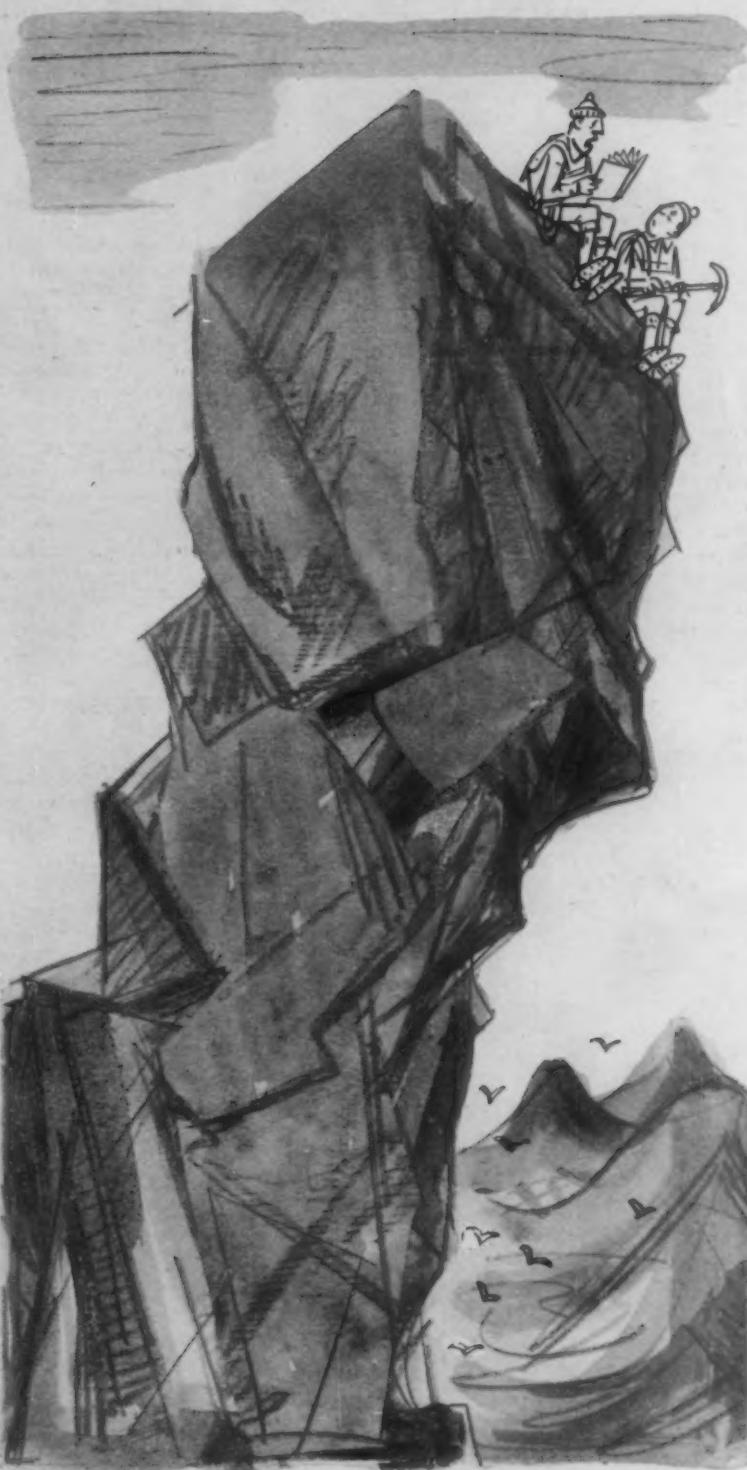
The rummest thing of all about us English is that we speak English. I have this from no less an authority than the British Travel Association. In fact the B.T.A. makes quite a point of this. "The beer," it says in one of its celebrations of English pubs—"is interesting and plentiful. The talk is good—and it's in English." In English. Elsewhere, it goes even farther. In Bond Street, it assures us, even the shoe clerks speak English. In Bond Street, of all places. I reckon that makes us unique. What the B.T.A. doesn't let on, though, is that we Bond Street shoe clerks, kowtowing, walking backwards and as usual behaving in a thoroughly servile way, call ourselves shop assistants. That, as we say here, slays me.

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#### Grave and Gay

"In previous cases such charges have been followed by the 'rehabilitation' of the men they sent to prison. Some of those restored to the Communist good graces won belated forgiveness post-humorously."

*Ceylon Daily News*



"This book doesn't seem to deal with the descent."

## Manly Advice

By RICHARD USBORNE

I WAS studying, at the British Museum, the bound volumes of *The Captain*, "A Magazine for Boys and 'Old Boys,'" that started its monthly life in 1899. I was really looking up the school stories of Mr. P. G. Wodehouse in their first serial and illustrated form. But I soon became hooked by the Editor's *Answers to Correspondents*, a column he ran under the by-line "The Old Fag" at the end of each instalment. These answers seemed to me so redolent of this and that, and so typical of something or other, that I began scribbling out my favourites. The following are a very small selection from the first three, bound half-yearly, volumes. Period, the Boer War. Anyone interested can study the form in at least another twenty volumes.

LONG VAC: You will get on all right with your people, if you learn to "bear and forbear." Sisters are a little trying sometimes, but they are all right if you treat them properly. You are strong; they are weak. Remember those with the greatest strength are generally found associated with the greatest kindness.

MLB (Tunbridge Wells) wants to get fat. Endeavour not to worry about anything. Take plenty of fresh air and games. Eat slowly . . . go to bed in good time and laugh as frequently as possible.

SANDOW (Tunbridge Wells): I do not care for a photograph of your muscular development, thank you.



MMS (Argyllshire): Pray don't apologize for being "only a girl." I don't think you are a poetess, if you want my candid opinion.

HL (Swindon): Nor do I think *you* are a poet, "HL"! Try boat-building for a change.

XYZ: What you say about "taking wheaten-meal instead of porridge, because there is more nitrate of phosphorus for bone-forming in it" is all Thomas Rot. Stick to porridge, and leave off worrying about your food.

MAISIE: Well, I suppose I must answer your question. I believe an autographed letter from Sir Henry Irving is worth quite 10s. But why should you wish to sell it? Surely the fact that you possess such an autographed letter from such a person is worth more to you than ten sordid shillings!

J. DILWORTH: Thanks for your letter. The autograph of the Earl of Shrewsbury is worth about a penny.

ANXIOUS: Send stamped addressed envelope.

ARTERY: Consult a doctor.

JMB: You go along to the nearest farm and have a chat with the good wife there. She will tell you all about it.

ARTHUR J. KING: I think volunteering would do you a lot of good. You needn't "catch on" bad language unless you like . . . I don't think you need fear joining the volunteers on that account. It is not at all manly to use bad language. Some of the greatest men who ever lived were never in the habit of swearing. General Gordon for example. I am sure you will make a good volunteer as you are the sort of fellow we want in our "citizen army."

NEMO: I think you ought to be heartily ashamed of yourself. From the first you should have informed your mother of this friendship and introduced your friend to her. Do so at once, and in future learn to control your tongue and behave like a gentleman.

E. A. SMITH: Any boy who smokes or drinks is an ass.

ALPHA: It is a notable fact that clergymen's sons come to the front not only as poets but in almost every other

phase of life. I think the reason is that they have to turn out and use their brains at an age when richer men's sons are still drawing supplies from "pater."

W. HANDS: Mr. C. B. Fry has never rowed in the University Boat Race.

FARTHEST NORTH: To remove tattoo marks wash the affected parts with common dilute acetic acid . . .

H. FEARS: Many thanks for your beautiful violets.

IN DOUBT: Don't pay them a penny. If they persist, inform the police.

A CONSTANT READER OF *The Captain*: Yes, cane the young beggar, or send him to a school where he will have to do as he is told.

D'ARTAGNAN: (1) Congratulations on passing the Cambridge Senior! Why not choose *John Halifax, Gentleman* for your prize? (2) My dear chap, I really cannot tell you how to cure yourself of being timid at hockey.

"WEAKLING": You are the first man I've met who measures his chest in feet. You are all right. Time will adjust your ins and outs. Inches don't count till you are some years older.

ALF: Abandon once and for all any idea of going on the stage. I wonder at any fellow of nineteen hesitating between the Army and the Stage. Be a soldier, my friend.

"ONE OF MY READERS": Of course you can take Holy Orders without going to Oxford or Cambridge. You should . . .

MED. STUDENT: If you would say what "monomania" you suffer from, I might be able to give you some advice. Probably your complaint is "nerves," for which exercise and fresh air are the best cures.

THE BABY: I think a girl might adopt a more profitable recreation than shooting. It is not exactly a pastime which fosters womanliness . . .

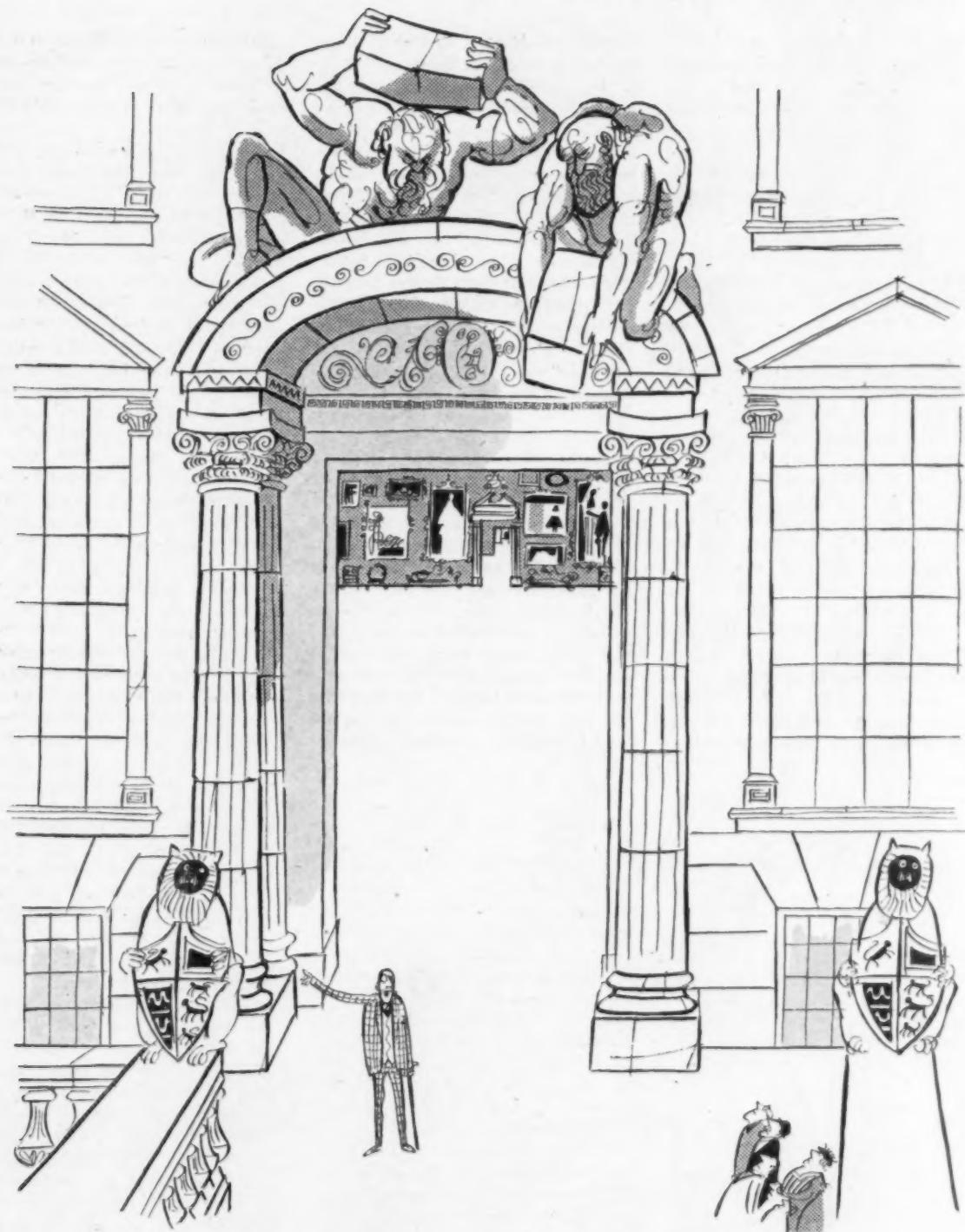
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"Take almost any young man you care to choose, star him in four consecutive smash-hit American musicals in the heart of London town, and that young man is likely to need a larger size in hats."

But Edmund Hockridge is exceptional. To start with he doesn't wear a hat . . ."

*News of the World*

See what you mean.



*"Oh, all right, we'll go in by the west wing."*

# Unreported Speeches

By A. P. H.

BY a happy chance our representative at the Mansion House banquet last night picked up the typescript text of the surprising speech which was made by Sir Humphrey Hail:

"My Lord Mayor, Sheriffs and Aldermen, Your Grace, Your Excellencies, my Lords, Ladies and Gentlemen—with any other ranks, categories or sex-groups here represented which have escaped my mind:

"It is my proud task to propose the health of the Guests, coupled with the name of Sir Gregory Powder, the Permanent Secretary to the Treasury. It was, my Lord Mayor, a happy thought of yours to give this great banquet, in this famous but funereal Hall, for the benefit of that neglected, nay, maligned body of men—and women—Her Majesty's Civil Servants. Those of the company who are acquainted with any of them—or their wives—will know how rarely these industrious toilers are able to enjoy a square meal in peace and comfort. We have all heard of those bolted breakfasts—the hurried ham-sandwich at the peak of day—from time to time the furtive cup of tea, the inadequate ginger biscuit: and even at the evening meal the dainties lovingly prepared are too soon deserted for the waiting homework. To-night, at least,

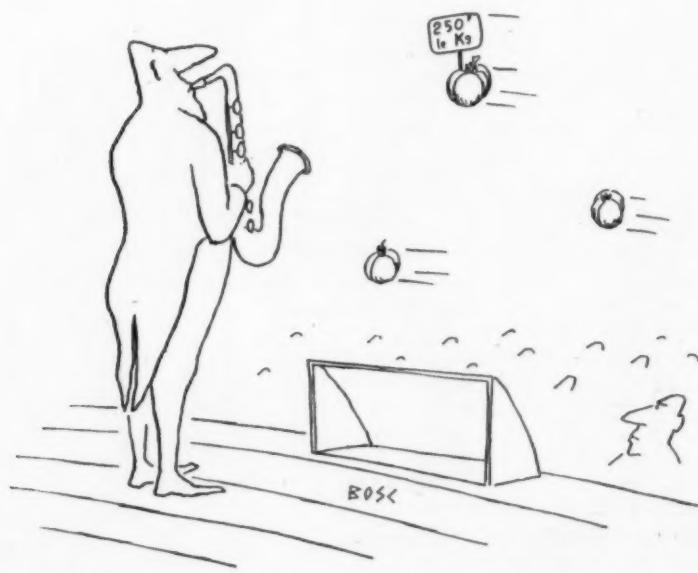
no files, no minutes, have spoiled the feast or damaged the digestion.

"But, as they know so well, there are two sides to every case. It is, I feel, no mere formality when I ask you to drink to their health. We live in a dangerous, or, as the common soldier says on the field of battle, an 'unhealthy,' world. Some of our principal perils are assembled at this board. Whichever way I turn I see, for example, that ancient enemy the Demon Alcohol: and, though he disguise himself with noble-sounding foreign names, in gracious glasses and decanters, his malignant power is the same. Here too, strangely, after the toast of Her Majesty the Queen, we have released the Fiend Tobacco, more feared to-day, it seems, than the Demon Alcohol. Few of us, however fond of wine, spend much of the day discussing cirrhosis of the liver, or lie awake and weigh the chances of a death through delirium tremens. But wherever two or three are gathered together, be the company old or young, the merry talk will turn at last to carcinoma of the lung; and this, apart perhaps from income tax, is the first anxiety of those who wake untimely in the night. Yet here they sit, your guests, happily drawing the fatal poisons into their own respiratory

apparatus or callously blowing them into the air that must be breathed by others.

"There is, or was, on every yard of these long tables as well that noxious food—if food it can be called—White Bread, which, ever since the days of Plato, has been denounced by reformers and rulers as an affront to Nature and an injury to Man, father of acidosis and other evils. Nor is that, I fear, the only mischief that has trespassed to-night down many a resentful alimentary canal. Who can doubt, my Lord Mayor, that, released like starving tigers, as I have said, upon a rarely rich repast, your guests have strayed deplorably from the path of a well-balanced diet, have swallowed starch and carbohydrates—those fascinating new potatoes!—to excess, and fats and sugars to the point of peril? Lastly, even here, though not in its most potent form, the Monster Sex is present, and many of your guests, diverted by the bright eyes and twinkling talk of an alderman's lady, are likely to have neglected the elementary duty of thorough mastication.

"My Lord Mayor, Sheriffs and Aldermen, it is in these compromising circumstances that I ask you, by an act of communal and ceremonial drinking, to sustain and fortify the health of your guests. You will not, I know, approach the task in any light or formal manner, as you have drunk so often to Her Majesty's Ministers, the Armed Forces of the Crown, Bench and Bar, the Houses of Parliament, the Church, and so forth. For here you have to deal with a more solemn toast, the true rulers of the land. To-day not even the youngest student of affairs has any doubt where real power resides, especially in those financial regions which are the domain of your guest of honour, Sir Gregory Powder. Certainly, if any Minister retains the classic illusions, they do not long survive the day when, in the old and laughable phrase, he 'takes over' one of Her Majesty's Departments. Thus might a convict be said to 'take over' the gaol to which he is committed. For a day or two the Minister may see himself as a new broom, sweeping out the dirty corners of indolence and habit, or a new breeze blowing fresh air and inspiration through



the building. But the broom will be snatched, the breeze will die away. Anyone who doubts this should contrive to join a citizen's deputation to one of Her Majesty's Ministers. There, at the head of the table, sits the great man, renowned for his rugged sense and honesty, affable and courteous, a monarch on his tiny throne. But at his elbow sits the senior permanent official, whispering behind his hand into the Minister's ear, pointing severely to marked passages in the Minister's brief, and when he is tired of his Minister's performance, strongly addressing the deputation himself. Let the Minister say a single incautious word of kindness or compliance, it is corrected at once by the hiss of the civil serpent—I beg your pardon. Nor in this domination is there anything surprising. For the Minister is a lodger at the mercy of the people's whim: the Civil Servant holds his office during Her Majesty's pleasure, which means for life: he will receive a pension—the Minister will not.

"All this, my Lord Mayor, must be of the greatest import at Her Majesty's Treasury, which rules all other Departments and is ruled in turn by Sir Gregory Powder. Least of all in this great Department is a new broom likely to achieve more than a momentary whisk in an unimportant corner. Here it was settled long ago that it is much easier to increase an existing tax than to justify a new one, that no old tax should ever be abandoned, whatever the arguments of the present day or the incautious pledges of the past. If the new breeze presumes to whisper some contrary opinions of his own he will soon be told, in the classic phrase, that his proposals 'open a serious door.'

"Note now, my Lord Mayor, before I close, the interesting connection between Sir Gregory and his men and some of the perils to which I referred in my opening remarks. Each year, from the Demon Alcohol and the Fiend Tobacco, the Treasury extracts the sum of £1,000,000,000, a figure which will shake and shock you the more if I remind you that before the last war the total Budget was of the order of £800,000,000 only. And these wise men still wonder why we have inflation! But these twin pests between them provide for the pay of the Navy, Army, Air Force, and Secret Service, the costs of the National Health Service, the



Foreign Service and the Ministry of Education in England and Scotland. The Fiend Tobacco alone yields two hundred million more than the cost of the National Health Service. The money they make, the services they support, do not necessarily, of course, make them respectable, for the Treasury is not ashamed to draw revenue from the earnings of professional harlots and illegal bookmakers. But these are comparatively trifling affairs. If the Demon and the Fiend are indeed as dangerous as they say, the question does arise whether the State, the Treasury, should continue to make them an essential prop of the financial structure. Perhaps they should be prohibited—import, manufacture, consumption, export. If any one man in this country could, by a

word or two, get such things done, it is Sir Gregory. He has not yet, I gather, said the words. And so, if after your lavish hospitality he succumbs, with some of his followers, to cirrhosis of the liver, carcinoma of the lung, or simple acidosis, he may say at least that he died for his country. Meanwhile, I give you the health of the Civil Service, coupled with the name of Sir Gregory Powder."

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"Dr. A——, who is a leading authority on this important subject, will speak on the general questions of weed control and Miss T—— will follow with a short talk on the control of wild oats of which she has made a special study."

From an Agricultural Executive Committee Notice

Any slides?

# Empire Day

By CLAUD COCKBURN

WERE the B.B.C. anything but what it is, it would let us have an earful of those uplifting bells which rang out from churches in such areas as Kenya and the Seychelles to celebrate *Daily Express* Day last week, and speaking personally for myself I should still like to see on television some pictures of those men in white coats—mobilized by the Empire Publicity Department—who on that historic Express Day ran about distributing, at key points of the Empire, little flags with Lord Beaverbrook on one side and a bit about the Empire on the other.

Of course all this activity was the result of an understandable misunderstanding of the nature of the understanding existing between the Empire and the *Daily Express*.

You will have to take my word for it that it wasn't really *Daily Express* Day at all. Anyway, that wasn't what it was meant to be. It was—and I do hope something can be done even now to clarify the position—*Empire Day*. And as for me, I am happy to recommend to anyone who thinks family and friends are going to forget his birthday or other anniversary near and dear to him, to go down to 119 Fleet Street and ask for a Mr. Bewick. Mr. Bewick is the man who had men in white coats standing about London meeting the morning

trains with flags which would assure them and everyone else that Empire Day was open for business.

The flags were given away free, and in my view that was an error. You give away something free and you get a lot of the populace—people with suspicious, twisted minds—running away (sometimes literally) with the notion that in some obscure way they are being played for suckers. At best they develop an obscure feeling that the whole thing is some sort of publicity stunt—a commercial plug, not to put too fine a point upon it.

Irony is not what I am employing here. Up to a point, and within reason, those fellows streaking across Oxford Circus for fear of being sewn up for a long-term subscription to the *Daily Express* in exchange for their little flag were mistaken—though I can see how the mistake occurred.

With the idea of clearing up the entire confusion, and tapping the barometer of Imperial Thinking In Our Day, I stepped across to 119 Fleet Street to see this Mr. Bewick, who, it must be evident, is doing more for the Empire than all the Lloyds, Selwyn and Lord, put together. Nobody was stoning him—not, at any rate, at the time of my visit.

Because the *Daily Express* disdains vulgar publicity, the Express Publicity

Department works not in the lovely old glasshouse to memories of which the thoughts of so many pioneers turn back as they retreat, step by step and sprint by sprint, from the outposts of Empire, but in a building, half-way between the *Express* and Racquet Court, which is of such modest appearance that some might describe it as a rat-warren. Yet let the irreverent remember that it is from headquarters like these that have been launched campaigns which oftentimes have stirred several million people for hours at a time.

Indeed, up to the last moment, I was under the impression that this was the very spot from which the immortal Yo-Yo campaign was launched by the *Evening Standard*. But it seems there is some doubt as to the authenticity of this legend. No matter. It was the centre of the Empire Day Drive of 1956, and there are many lights in which the Empire can be regarded as actually more important than Yo-Yo.

I found Mr. Bewick sitting shirt-sleeved in a pretty dense thicket of envelopes sprouting from in-trays and out-trays and tea-trays and ash-trays and just trays, and fully equipped, I was happy to see, with one of those executive-type telephone systems where everyone can listen in on everyone else and nobody knows quite instantly who is talking to whom. You could lift, you felt, one of those receivers and be uncertain whether you were going to find yourself talking to a flag merchant in Bradford engaged in putting out more of them for the big day, or the Archbishop of Canterbury promising to instruct the Vicars and Rectors to get the church bells ringing as the *Express* said they ought.

If you were to say that Mr. Bewick was looking a little harassed—game, mind you, and every inch a bulldog and Crusader, but still harassed—you would be saying no more than the truth.

As I understood it, he felt that to a certain extent the Empire had got out of hand: it hadn't—more specifically those fellows over on the Editorial side, and more specifically still (though Mr. Bewick didn't say this) Lord Beaverbrook hadn't—waited for the publicity chaps to get everything laid on and prepared before they rushed into



print with all this talk of flags and bells. ("Colour—gaiety," the *Express* had expressly said, "these are the fitting symbols of the day.")

I took this as a strong indication that, contrary to the opinion of *naskers* here and there, the whole—what's the word I'm groping for? Not stunt—well, thing, was a selfless gesture executed in memory of childhood days in New Brunswick.

Mr. Bewick, who may have thought me appalled at the idea of anyone doing anything without alerting the publicity people in good time, was quick to assure me that Publicity would nevertheless come up to scratch. "Don't worry," he said, "the men in white coats will be there to distribute the flags." Perhaps I still looked bothered, because the next thing he did was actually to give me a flag—Empire one side, *Express* the other—right there, in case I missed my white-coat in the morning.

I was then ill-advised enough to ask—merely because I wanted to know—just what you did when you suddenly wanted, say, five million little flags with pins for the lapel. Who made them? Where?

Mr. Bewick looked at me as though I were going to stone him. I could see him thinking swiftly of all those awful times when patriotic organizations ordered flags and after they had been distributed some snooper found out they had been made in Japan or by sweated labour.

I had meant nothing of the kind, and it certainly was not true in this case, but somehow the jolt of it seemed to give Mr. Bewick a suddenly enhanced sense of his responsibilities to the Empire.

Disentangling a flag-entrepreneur from the telephone line, he got through to some super-executive, and, after a few minutes' converse abruptly decided to throw the White Man's Burden up the street and on to the shoulders of the Editorial.

"After all," he said, "this isn't in any sense a publicity stunt, and just because the publicity office is handling it it doesn't mean, see what I mean?"

I said I saw just what he meant, and would ring the Editorial.

And I want to say here and now that if there's one thing I like about the *Daily Express* editorial department it is that little note of coyness, diffidence,



shyness which is all too rare in the brash world of to-day. None of them wanted to boast about how much the campaign had cost, how many "Church leaders" had actually "co-operated with the *Daily Express* to suggest a simple order of service for Empire Day in the schools."

This self-effacement extended itself, on Empire Day itself, as far as the people who look after visitors—and potential stone-throwers—in the front hall. At about midday none of them was wearing any of the millions of little flags. I expect they had given them away to under-privileged citizens who had missed their Man in the White Coat and were in distress. I even saw an *Evening Standard* van without a flag.

Some obscure train of thought led me to recall the time when the late Lord

Northcliffe went to some resort to see how many people were wearing the *Daily Mail* Hat, and the only one he could see was his Foreign Editor at *The Times*, Mr. Wickham Steed.



"Child prodigies have become the rage of Paris . . . The latest . . . to reach print is a 14-year-old shepherdess, Berthe Grimault. According to the preface she could not even write all the letters of the alphabet when she composed her novel. . . . It is a monstrous tale of four madmen who escape from a lunatic asylum. 'Nothing more grotesque has been published in France for a long time' is the unanimous verdict of the critics. A fair sample of it all is M. Fournier's preface. 'At this moment,' he writes, 'her thought is concentrating on her second book 'To Kill One's Child.' She found inspiration for its framework in two minutes . . .'—*News Chronicle*  
Hadn't far to look, of course.

## Employers' Liability

TUESDAY when the hooter went I ran to get the bicycle  
 (I like to see the second house and jib at being late)  
 And banged my ankle proper on a sort of a projection  
 On the corner of the cycle-stand that's nearest to the gate.

Wednesday I was walking lame and Sid Mackay came up to me  
 (Sid is our Convener and as clever as they come).  
 "Hurt?" he said. "A bit," I said, "I banged it in the cycle-shed."  
 "Ah-ha," he said, "you want to claim for compensation, chum."

"Compensation hell," I said, "I shouldn't have been hurrying.  
 That thing's been on the stand," I said, "for twenty years or more."  
 "Ho," said Sid, "so that's it then, Contributory Negligence?  
 You better talk to Sharpe," he said, "that's what the Union's for."

Sharpe he hummed and hawed a bit (we saw him on the Saturday)  
 And talked of Section This and That not covering the facts.  
 "Ah," said Sid, "you'll never prove a statutory negligence.  
 Let's stick to Common Law," he said, "and skip the Factory Acts."

Four or five days after, Mr. Pennyfeather sent for me,  
 And who should I find waiting at the door for me but Sid?  
 "You be coming in?" I said. "What, let you go alone?" he said.  
 "A lot of compensation you'd be getting if I did."

Pennyfeather told me they denied the liability.  
 He offered me his sympathy but not a penny more.  
 He pointed out the benefits of National Insurance  
 Until Sid said I was claiming both, this wasn't 'forty-four.

"They'll not pay," I said to Sid when once we got outside again,  
 "Old Pennyfeather's pretty tough and knows a thing or two."  
 But Sid said "Pennyfeather hell, it's not for him to settle,  
 It's the Moon and Stars Insurance will be settling with you."

But Sharpe, he didn't seem too keen to put the application in,  
 But Sid said "You've had trouble, you're entitled to be paid.  
 We'll go to Willy Gildenstern to get you your Certificate,  
 Old Willy is a wizard when it comes to getting Aid."

Willy got it, sure enough, and when I mentioned evidence  
 And said that I was worried what I might be made to say,  
 Sid said not to talk so daft, and all we had to worry at  
 Was what we'd take to save them costs they couldn't make us pay.

We settled for a hundred quid and went and bought a motor-bike,  
 And I said if we smashed her up we'd look a pair of fools,  
 But Sid said there was always risk in any sort of enterprise  
 And Accidental Injury was safer than the Pools.

P. M. HUBBARD

# One Penny per Drupe

By PHILIP HOLLAND

**M**R. VAISIE FINLATER, the proposed Chairman of the Druped Fruit Marketing Board, to-day continued his evidence before the Public Inquiry into the Scheme. It was the ninety-fourth day of the hearing.

Mr. Finlater said that the organization which he had the honour to represent was vitally concerned in this. The present situation was chaotic. Anyone could buy or sell a druped fruit. The housewife had only to walk into her greengrocer or fruiterer and ask for a pound of raspberries, boysenberries or whatever it might be and the shopkeeper could fill her order at whatever price he thought she was willing to pay. The housewife could accept or reject the fruit offered without giving any reason. If the shopkeeper did not sell all the fruit he had bought from the wholesaler he himself had to bear the loss. The Board had instructed him to say that they would not rest until this was put right.

The next point which he must mention was punnets. It was no good beating about the bush. Druped fruit had been packed in punnets for hundreds of years. It was said that the punnet was light, clean and cheap, and that it was popular alike with the fruitgrower, the wholesaler, the retailer and the housewife. It was proposed under the Scheme that the punnet should be retained. The Board was surprised and disturbed to know this. Under the Scheme the wholesaler, the fruitgrower and the retailer would probably be amalgamated. They would be one. But not, of course, the housewife (*Laughter*). There were a good many of her (*Loud laughter*). And he was sure that we were all very glad that this should be so (*Hysterical laughter and cheers*). But to get back to the punnet. Druped fruits would now be packed in hygienically sealed packages, made from a by-product of engine oil. The blackberry, for example, would be pre-packed in multiples of fourteen at the District or Sub-area Packhouse.

Thence it would be conveyed to the Area Collecting Centre, when it would be distributed to Central Distribution Depots throughout the country. It was hoped that it would be possible to

arrange a scheme to get the blackberry from the Central Distribution Depôt to the actual shop. Details of this would be worked out in due course.

It was estimated that the housewife would get her blackberry within about ten days of picking. The fruitgrowers said that without the Scheme she would, as at present, get it within twenty-four hours. That might be. A few days one way or the other would not, he felt sure, make much difference. A lot of hot air had been talked about fresh fruit. It was said that the housewife did not think that a raspberry was fresh if it had green spots on it. Tests had shown that this was quite wrong. The green spots, unless they comprised more than 4·3 per cent of the surface area, were perfectly harmless. It was just a matter of educating the public. The pre-packed blackberry fitted into the scheme. The punneted blackberry did not. We must all be prepared to make sacrifices for the common good.

And now, he said, he would like to turn for a moment to the cost of the scheme. It had been said that fruit marketed under the scheme would cost more than that sold under the present haphazard arrangements. He very much doubted whether this would be so. It was quite impossible to say in advance what the cost of the scheme would be. Of course certain commitments would have to be met. Everyone in the scheme would be inspected by an inspector not more than twice a year. The inspector would, in the case of

fruitgrowers for example, see that the fruit was in fact druped; that the acreage, variety and husbandry were of a type approved by the Board; that suitable precautions against Hogg's Disease (which was a condition brought about in the picker by eating too high a proportion of the fruit he or she picked) had been taken, and that the fruit-grower was in general a person who might reasonably be allowed to grow fruit.

There would have to be a small administrative staff. The Headquarters of the Board would be in London and a suitable building—Wellington House, Brook Street—had been acquired for that purpose. There would of course have to be offices at Central, Area, District and Sub-Area levels. The total staff in all these offices would probably not be more than three or four thousand, and he was sure that we would all agree that this was very reasonable.

The final success of the Scheme rested in the hands of the public. He was sure that we could "make a go" of it. The members of the Board would always remember that they were public servants, and if they (the public) indicated at any time, through the proper channels, that the scheme should come to an end, they (the members of the Board) would be only too happy to acquiesce.

In reply to a question from the Court, Mr. Finlater said that as Chairman of the Board his salary would be five thousand pounds a year, plus expenses.



# The Blackboard Dingle

By R. G. G. PRICE

THE curious case of Mr. Balaam, curious because anybody thinks it curious, makes it less surprising that *The Blackboard Jungle* should be going round the country with an X certificate, I suppose because cries of "cissies" from a juvenile audience might strain Anglo-American relations. It can't be because the British boy has anything to learn from the mild pranks of the New York boys who face the new master in his first job.

Glenn Ford plays the beginner earnestly, as the kind of man who could be lured into highminded discussion while his bootlaces were being tied. I thought his class compared very favourably with some classes through whose

hands I passed in my educational days, and I never taught in anything that would be considered over here a tough school. Ford's class do not light fireworks or keep pets or even burst paper bags. They do not turn up at intervals during the lesson with increasingly preposterous excuses for being late. They do not seem to have heard of the British custom of removing screws from desks and letting them disintegrate loudly. They do not pretend to have fits. They never, like some forms I have known, rehearse their tactics out of school. They are, for the most part, unarmed. Ford seems to lead a pretty carefree life. He can walk across the playground into school meeting nothing

worse than a grim silence. Not a stone is thrown. In snowy weather his pupils do not throw snowballs at him, even snowballs free from razor-blades. At first whenever he turned a corner in the school buildings I instinctively looked for the foot that would trip him up; it was never there. He sits down in his classroom without first inspecting his chair. He walks up and down between the desks!

On Ford's first day one of the older men, rather a British schoolmaster in type, warns him never to turn his back. Disregarding this sensible advice, he turns to write on the blackboard and a baseball smashes into it beside his head. I can imagine how some of my earlier pupils would have dealt with a boy who missed at that range. There are various episodes designed to raise sympathy for Ford. A female teacher is attacked; but she is shown later in the film to be a bad lot and anyway the boy is a slow worker and nothing much has happened by the time the staff burst in. Then there is a scene when Ford and a colleague are beaten up by a gang of boys in a back alley. They are annoyed because his evidence will send the girl's attacker to the Reform School, a not ungenerous motive. The British papers have been full of comparable incidents lately and I was interested to watch the American technique. As far as I could see, the boys used nothing but fists. I saw no sign of bicycle chains or coshes.

I admit that Ford gets a flesh-wound when the gang leader draws a knife on him; but really the boy does very little but brandish his weapon and growl and the wound is caused by his hysterically hitting out as the master makes a dramatic slow march towards him, not by an expert thrust. Dash it all, my own teaching career never touched the lowest reaches of the educational system and even I have had a knife pulled on me. It is true that it was a smaller knife and, more to the point, a smaller boy. The growls, in my case, were mixed with snarls and references to various small creatures the boy had eviscerated. Ford's pupils, after an agonizing reappraisal, swing to his side and one of them joins in with the form flagpole. My pupils were highly entertained. They got annoyed that I would



"Excellent, Bos'n, excellent!"

not make use of the knives they offered me, though I obviously could not because I had to hold my assailant's wrists. Ford drags his victim off to the Head. If I had called on higher authority to help me I should have been told that I ought not to have allowed a boy to pull a knife on me.

In the film the relations of assistant master and Head are quite contrary to my own experience. Ford gets the job by reciting Shakespeare to the Head and then correcting him on a point of fact. When the boys accuse Ford of racial discrimination the Head attacks him for infringing the school's liberal principles. Ford *shouts* at the Head, who immediately caves in, says he believes him and asks him to shake hands. Ford does not, on the other hand, shout at his class. He relies partly on high-falutin generalizations, partly on pregnant silences. If I had tried a pregnant silence on Upper IVb they would never have noticed that I had stopped talking. Compared with British boys, these New Yorkers are only sporadically noisy. The laughter, the rudeness, the shouted remarks come from a background of silence. Ford has no difficulty in getting his voice right into the back row. Why, I have known back rows that could be communicated with only in pantomime.

The school seems to have no textbooks, exercise books or syllabus. Ford gives the impression of searching his mind for the kind of things that teachers of English do. Once he introduces a tape-recorder and invites the boys to take the microphone and talk about anything they like. The best these alleged toughs can do is to describe a morning in their lives with the word "stinking" before each noun. I have known seven-year-olds who could do better than that. He makes a smash hit with a projector and a cartoon of a fairy tale. Any of our boys would have had that projector to bits in no time, or at least reinserted the film and run it through upside down. These boys laugh uproariously at the simple humours and stay in their desks all through. Their immobility is very noticeable. Ford never has the trouble I used to have in getting boys to sit down. I remember one form that would learn French pronouns only as a human pyramid and several forms that would go away and sit on the stairs if one did not keep firm control of the door.



"Well, whatever it is it's bound to be rude."

At one point I thought there was going to be something nearer to British experience. The boys send notes to the novice's wife accusing him of carrying on an affair with the new woman teacher. This looks like developing into a plot that would put even our most experienced schoolmasters on their mettle; but it remains at the level of mere childish assertion. There is no attempt to produce evidence, no faked photographs, no forged letters. *The Blackboard Jungle* will make many a British teacher envious.

### *Ode on the Automation of Imbecility*

I TURN a handle twice an hour  
That sets a lever free  
That pokes a fire that stokes a power  
That runs a factory.

I've simple tastes; I don't complain.  
In fact I'm *proud* to know  
They'll need an Electronic Brain  
To do it when I go.

HAZEL TOWNSON

## Inside Scotland

## Fun and Games

By MARSHALL PUGH

SUMMER sometimes takes a kilted assistant secretary of the Scottish Tourist Board to Scandinavia where he lectures in the Doric on our Scottish sense of humour. His audience grows larger as his reputation spreads, and pandemonium breaks out when he tells the one about the mother pointing to the marching soldiers and saying "They're all oot o' step except oor Jock."

Then he has them falling into the fjords at the story of the man who lay down in front of an Edinburgh tramcar to commit suicide—and died of pneumonia. In the great tradition of our revered comedians who taught the world that the Scot was maudlin and mean, he makes sallies about the Scots keeping the Sabbath and everything else they can lay their hands on. Then he talks of the courting man who pointed to a grave and proposed to his lass by saying "My folks lie there, Mary. Would you like to lie there too?"

Realizing that his success can only mean that the Scandinavians have the same swift and happy sense of humour

as ourselves, he always adds "The field of Scottish humour is vast and varied as Scotland is in its scene. From what I have said you will recognize that it is tinged throughout with a friendliness which is essentially a trait of the Scots. On your visits to Scotland you will very quickly discover that you have a second bond with the Scots, apart from that of ancestry. You have the common bond of love of laughter."

In Scotland the love of laughter is so great that even the love of sport must play second fiddle. The joy of the thing, as any tourist can discover for himself, is that to many of my countrymen games are little more than a pretext for fun.

The visitor to Ardnamurchan, now, might not be over-impressed by the Kilchoan Regatta, but he would find the ball that follows it a very different affair. At 11 p.m. the whist-drive chairs are removed from the Kilchoan Hall, the gas is lit and tea is handed round, followed at five-minute intervals by milk, sugar, then by cakes arrived safely from Glasgow.

At 11.35 or thereabouts the ball begins and the real sport with it, for the average welterweight on the floor never practises the *pas-de-bas* step and has never heard of the Caledonian Ball. The most graceful dancer among them is young Lachlan McLachlan of Salen, many times winner of the hop-step-and-jump at the Tobermory Highland Games.

To heighten the hilarity the ball is officially dry, and it is customary for the revellers, seamen for the most part, to hide their bottles in the rushes by the fence, marking the spot by cross-bearings on the Tobermory Light and the lights of the largest ships at anchor in the Sound. The navigational exercises are more skilful than anything by day, and as the night matures and the bottle levels drop there is the added spice of danger in the moonlight.

The same mood of full-blooded enjoyment can be observed at a shinty final in Oban. At first sight, Oban might not appear a place for carefree frivolity. It is a tall town, tumbling to a bold, broad bay which is shared by the railways, the round-trip-to-Iona boats and steamers. Behind the bay are the railway station and the bus terminal, the quick-meal cafés and the cold hotels, boarding houses, multiple stores, the chemists who develop snaps, the contractors who develop and supply demand throughout the islands. Normally Oban is the most sadly lovely transit shed in all the Highlands, but the shinty final changes that.

A misguided minority might come to watch the match but the rest are there for the fun. When a local team is involved there is none of this English humbug of impartiality and the spectators form up in a soldierly fashion and march to Mossfield Park behind the Oban Pipe Band, playing "Men of Argyll."

When the ball goes high and the shinties clash in the throw-up, normally Campbells from Inveraray town lead in offering the traditional warning to the referee to play the game. Not too long ago the Inveraray men were a subdued lot, for the last Duke of Argyll was a traditional Campbell nobleman. When



rationing was on and the old Duke had no more than meat-loaf for his table he had a piper play it in, forbye. In his day at Inveraray, caps were touched and pipes and tobacco were left for the fairies on the islands of Loch Fyne.

But now Inveraray is moving with the times, the fishermen of faery Loch Fyne are using echo sounders, Inveraray Castle is repainted and Campbell clansmen from America have begun to rally beneath its walls with their half-crowns at the ready. The men of Inveraray are prosperous, free, pleasure-loving like their neighbours, and at half-time in the shinty final their merry threats ring round the room marked *Neutral Officials Only*.

When the shinty is over, Oban echoes with joy and the wild men of Glencoe are tapped on the shoulder and asked to go home and sing their Gaelic hymns to the prefabs of Ballachulish. At the sound of an English accent old men of Appin will loudly recall the Sheep Clearances, showing the surprisingly long memories they have. It is pointless then to try to discuss the finer points of shinty, for the finest point of shinty is that the rules are never very noticeable and it is the outcome and the aftermath of the game that count.

The out-of-season visitor to Scotland who is in search of something of this sort might go farther and fare worse than at a Rangers-Celtic Charity Cup match in Glasgow.

As you may know, it is obligatory for Celtic and Rangers supporting parties to approach the arena from different directions and to enter by different doors. This is often the most colourful part of the ceremony, but the snag in watching the brake parties is that full details of the charabanc routes are not always given in advance. In recent years there have been a number of ambushes and Glasgow Police is undermanned.

Within the ground the waving of banners is banned since there is a certain amount of religious and racial rivalry involved, and the custom of referring to the few neutral spectators as "flipping atheists" is discouraged. But the keener supporter's respect for the wishes of the police is far more subtle than anything in the south. Not mistaking the Glasgow policeman's height for authority, his soft tongue for kindness, or his dead pan for wisdom, the more high-spirited supporters tend



to enjoy the game in their own way, with or without interference.

Once, after a mounted police charge upon supporters, the representative of an English magazine called upon a Glasgow civic dignitary to comment, and he described the charge as a most exhilarating interlude in the game. In the south his remark was widely misinterpreted, and there we touch the hem of a problem.

To enjoy the amenities of Scotland the visitor should appreciate that the conception of humour and gamesmanship varies from nation to nation. Loving laughter as we do, we do not agree that the English have drawn up final laws for both.

Sometimes we try light-heartedly to convert them to our point of view. After an Anglo-Scottish international at Wembley there are always many genial, tam-o'-shantered men, moss-trooping in the Edgware Road, trying to raise a little gaiety among the locals. Why else would they greet the English, that nation of poets and butchers, with talk of Burns and war?

2 2

"There is, all the same, a trend towards larger units in the laundry industry, as in most other industries. There is also a tendency for the industry to shrink."

*Financial Times*

Nothing new there.

## In the Night

By G. W. STONIER

BUT what yawns and groans heaving out of nowhere—out of me—what sighs, stretchings . . . bed-time!

I never could understand those critics of *Hamlet* who question the dumb-show. Surely nature requires it. The bather on the brink, the batsman at Lord's with all summer in his stride (but watch those pegs fly), the lady in *Tristan* whose bosom promises top notes, and the gentleman picking his teeth as a sign that he'd appreciate the menu: without the dumb-show where should we be?

So with Sleepyhead; ham perhaps, and play-acting will vanish the instant I make a move. A new phase is beginning. Even as I impress myself gloatingly in rubber, the white sheet daunts. Shall I sleep? Shall I ever sleep again?

Yet I snuggle, I grunt; the light's put out, the last word spoken; a glow-worm cigarette fades; and I set off, blindfold yet with a certain assurance, towards—what exactly?—the Equivocal Regions, cliffs without fall, sunk cities, rooms within rooms within rooms. There doubt may move mountains—or the longed-for cup out of reach—and the giraffe is not a giraffe.

In fact, lowering his head in passing, he remarks "Don't you think you're forgetting something?" . . . and I'm back where I started.

\* \* \* \* \*

Not I, but some "I" sent out to reconnoitre. This fellow has his own methods of travel. Usually he will start by catching a train, and *does* catch it, getting there in plenty of time so as to



walk the whole length of the platform and claim a seat in the front compartment.

Having found the seat, which must be a corner one facing the engine (not for the usual reasons, as you'll see in a moment), he waits. The carriage fills. Enormous newspapers are spread. People try to look in, but turn away. The dread moment arrives: a whistle, a shriek, a quick shuffle! Now we see why the corner seat was so necessary, as, clutching the window-strap with one hand and the hard cushion with the other, he begins to slide. Back through the partition into the window seat of the compartment behind he slides; and very soon he is far down the second coach; as the wheels gather speed he flits through every compartment in turn, the guard's van—and the guard himself—offering trifling resistance. This has happened so often that, folding away his paper, he accepts it with a certain resignation. There are good nights when he may successfully hold his place; bad, when nothing adheres, and he can no more move with the train than the soap advertisement glaring down on him from the platform.

You may ask why I put up with all this. In the first place I can't help myself; in the second, he does somehow—by means never quite clear to me—manage to get there. Where? Ah well . . .

\* \* \* \* \*

Other selves—while the reconnoitring one picks himself up off the line and decides to walk, with seven-league boots—have been lolling about, passing the time of night.

One mumbles, chewing and spitting out words, through the alphabet. Call him A.

B poses questions of conduct. C tries, in the most elaborate detail, to reconstruct unimportant scenes of the day. D is the burglar alarmist, who grew up in a household where burglars were always popping in, to take little elephants or tins of peaches. He has never met a burglar face to face. But he listens. And by Jove! there are footsteps, echoing as by day in an arcade, that come nearer . . . nearer . . . and halt.

E is a child, with a nightlight under

the bed, and a dread of tigers. F will speak, think, only in French (bad at that). G hopes eternally. H worries.

I—

I turn over, this bundle of selves—and there are more peeling off every minute—to start again.

\* \* \* \* \*

I feel a tug from D: the footsteps on the pavement are slowly walking away. After a moment of strained attention I see, gazing at the ceiling, the lights changing at the corner, the street's perspective, a white cliff of buildings, the river, the moon and all space fiction above; a church clock strikes one, and years later, one again; it must be from that hideous sequence 12.30—1.0—1.30, when everything is in doubt, suspended.

I am almost asleep. But how I got there, what I do and say, what deserts I skim, what heights scale, who are my close—my too-close, if indistinguishable—companions, who can tell? A tree gives one look and runs. I say to myself "That's very extraordinary—I must remember." But shall I? Paper and pencil, when I wake, will be thrust aside, and I'll wander all day in a mild perplexity . . .

\* \* \* \* \*

Again that dreadful word, cut in stone: what have I forgotten?

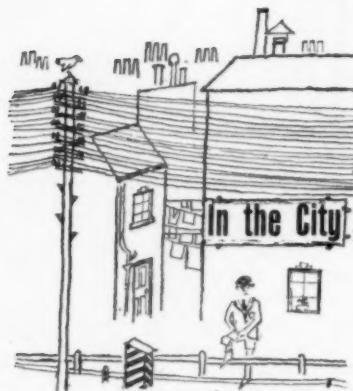
Boot!

Whose boot? I haven't any. Oh, the car's! There's a whole order of night-friends who go about looking for unlocked boots. Others, with nets and a van, poach cats.

So, pulling on a rain-coat, I must go down . . . moonlight—of course . . . the boot seems secure, but I'll try it again to make sure . . . getting into rhyme . . . and meanwhile the front door slams . . . what a wind! . . . in the telephone box I dial 999, and at last they give me the number of the all-night locksmith (this you see, has happened before), but he's out . . . so am I, ha ha! . . . oh lord, nights in a telephone box . . .

Then I pull myself together, scream "Idiot! You're in bed!"

And—would you believe it?—I am! I snore! I turn over! I'm off again!



### Up in Smoke

**I**NVESTORS, no less than addicts, are having to think twice these days about tobacco. There are many questions to be answered. Will the April increase in duty—pushing the retail price of a standard packet of twenty cigarettes to 3s. 10d. and increasing slightly the distributors' profit margins—invoke the law of diminishing returns? Will medical and statistical reports on a possible connection between cigarette smoking and lung cancer convert the British into a nation of non-smokers? Or a nation of pipe-smokers and snuff-takers? Will competition in a shrinking trade become fiercer, more expensive and inimical to doughty dividends?

So far the cigarette trade and the tobacco market have stood up well to the cancer scare. Older generations of smokers seem determined to go down, if necessary, smoke-plumed into the darkness. Purveyors of fancy cures for the tobacco habit have enjoyed a minor boom, and so too have manufacturers of pipes; but cures and pipes take a lot of getting used to, and in most pockets the familiar packet has reappeared after a surprisingly brief exile.

In the United States (where the scare has equipped half the cigarettes ignited with some kind of filter-tip) Wall Street's interest in the weed has shown remarkable resilience. And in Britain an expected slump in tobacco shares has so far proved no more than minor out-break of bearishness. Imperial Tobacco's Ordinaries (Imps), Gallaher, Carreras, Dunhill and Godfrey Phillips have all depreciated by 20 per cent during the last few months, but so too have shares in other industrial groups. Yields are of course high—Imps at 8½, Carreras 8½, Dunhill 12½, Gallaher 9½ and Phillips 14½—and would be higher but for the

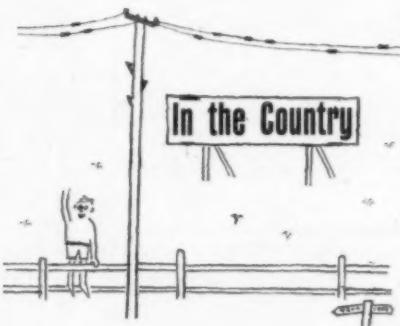
fact that many small investors have been strongly attracted by the new speculative element in tobacco business.

The leading brands, Player's Medium, Senior Service, Churchman, Woodbines and Weights, are now being challenged by new makes, among them Churchman's "Time" and the Dunhill "spun fibre tip" manufactured by Carreras. Nothing is more certain than that the reeking tube will be modified, adapted and restyled to meet the expected flow of rumour and/or evidence. In a few years' time we ancients may all be smoking some other weed, or inhaling purified fumes through portable filter beds. It is most unlikely, however, that the nation's youth will follow our example. Taxation has already taken most of the pleasure out of smoking, and in the eyes of most young people the habit is almost as extravagant, vicious and dangerous as it was to our great-grandparents. We may continue to support the tobacco manufacturers, but the signs are that our children won't.

For investors then tobacco shares must now be considered a bit of a gamble. The leading companies are making fine profits, and dividends are high. Gallaher's, for example, have just declared a final dividend of 20 per cent, making 25 per cent for 1955, and have increased gross profits by no less than 55 per cent during the last trading year. Imps pay 21 per cent gross and the dividend is adequately covered. But there is now a large "if" against each of these apparently attractive propositions.

Meanwhile it will be interesting to follow the fortunes of the revived cigarette coupon trading system. The "Exclusive" brand of George Jackson (Amalgamated Tobacco Corporation) sell at 3s. 10d. for 20 and each packet contains a voucher worth 3d. Will this economically wasteful sales stimulant succeed again, or will the Tobacco Trade Association, hamstrung by the Monopolies Commission, manage to stifle it at birth?

MAMMON



### Our Lost Wooden Walls

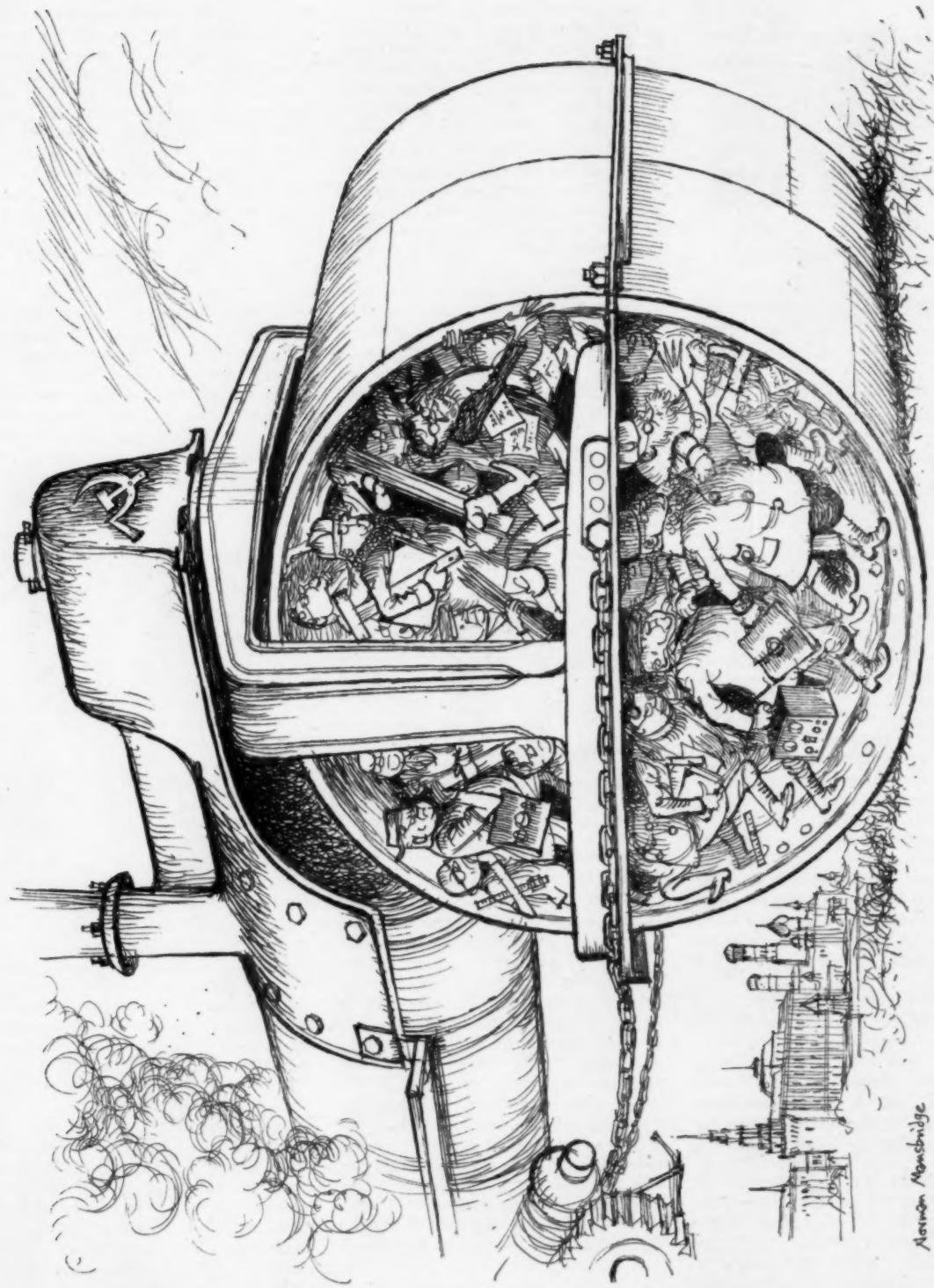
**W**OMEN will have to be whipped a little more since walnut trees are becoming so scarce, and now that the one is no longer there to be improved we may as well relieve our frustration on the other. It is more than annoying to find, as one stands in the wake of this little car which is careering over England, that one's neighbour's pockets are loaded while one's own remain empty.

I have always thought the walnut was the most valuable tree in England, but I liked it for its nuts alone. I was the more deceived. It seems that the timber is indispensable to good cabinet making, and although we have abandoned anything but the manufacture of shoddy utility furniture or faking antiques in this country, the French and the Belgians still need the wood. Consequently, to our chagrin and dismay,

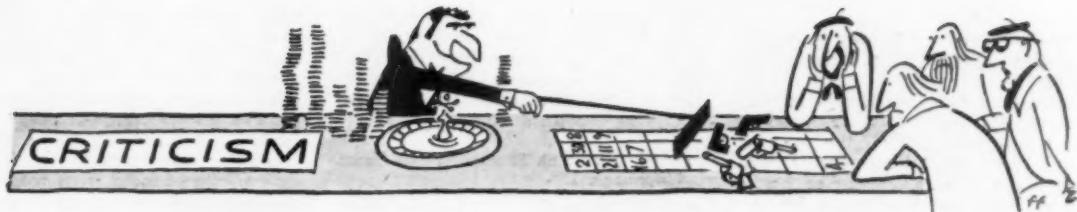
we are finding that a French timber merchant is buzzing round the country buying up the last remaining mature trees and paying as much as £500 for one.

I do not suppose one thousand walnut trees have been planted in this country during the last ten years. We no longer plant for the next generation. A walnut tree takes two centuries to grow to maturity. Our disinclination to save shows in more than the Post Office bank; that is a trivial account, and mere paper at the best. A firm who supply saplings for forestry tell me that they have not had an order for hard wood during the last twelve months. We plant spruce, larch and fir that will mature in twenty-five years, and will help pay our death duties. I suppose the only reason we have oak trees in our parks or ash in our avenues is that the Admiralty once subsidized the planting of these trees, just as alder trees were protected by Queen Elizabeth because the wood was needed for the manufacture of gunpowder.

Superstition has protected other trees from the axe. Even I can remember when it was impossible to get a woodcutter to cut down a holly tree or an elderberry tree, as they believed that the Cross was made with these woods. But such brakes no longer halt the circular saw. At £500 a go we shall soon be studded with nothing but ghastly Christmas trees. RONALD DUNCAN



"We are threatened by a new kind of Russian steamroller. It consists of a great mass of technicians, technologists, teachers, business and other experts, all intended to export Communism at the same time as they export their goods and services."—Mr. Selwyn Lloyd



## BOOKING OFFICE

### Boasting of Henry James

SOME while ago an American telephoned me and said he was in Britain on the track of Henry James's spoors and as he'd noticed I'd published one or two little pieces about the Master he'd very much appreciate making my acquaintance. He came round and, like rival lovers of the same beautiful woman, we spent the evening in a fairly subtle game of each showing the other that he had understood better the special nature of the Master-Mistress.

"I thought you might like to see this," he would say, and hand me James's annotated copy of *Les Fleurs du Mal*, and I, realizing that my un-annotated copy of his *Barbey d'Aurevilly* wouldn't do as a riposte, would fumble in a drawer for typescripts of two unpublished letters. Finally the American came out with his trump. "Second day I was over this side," he began, "I was down at Lamb House. I'd got a theory, you see, a theory about James and desks. As I see it they had a high symbolical significance in his life. They were, you might say, the altar of his genius, and every altar has its tabernacle, its secret compartment. Now, I knew his desk was at Rye. If I could find the tabernacle I might find the Host laid there long ago. I got myself alone with the desk. I opened drawer after drawer and in five minutes I'd accounted for all the space except about two square feet. It was easy then; I took out one of the small drawers, put my hand in the bottom of the space and found that the piece of wood the drawer rested against was loose—and would slide sideways. I put my hand right through into the tabernacle and felt around. I groped. Nothing, nothing, nothing—and then, something, like a slim, leather-bound book. I pulled it out. It was a note-case in red morocco. In the middle there was 'Henry James' in gold, and 'Great Britain' in one corner and 'U.S.A.' in the other. There were three things in it. A return ticket from Rye to London dated January 14, 1911, an invitation card to Lady Jersey's at Osterley and a prescription for a new pair of spectacles. So there was the

figure in the carpet, the great posthumous Jamesian secret.

"Well, none of it belonged to the National Trust so I put the case in my pocket and later sent it to the James Estate back home. At the same time I dropped Leon Edel a line in case he'd like to see it. A few days ago Leon wrote me he'd examined the note-case and its contents and it had solved him a

little Burgess" who had always been for James "an awfully decent little chap" gave me tea the other day—on Lamb House china—in his bungalow near Rye, where he lives with trophies of his Master and various cups for amateur bantam-weight boxing. As we talked of "The Toff," as he called him, crumbs fell on a silk waistcoat that had once covered the ampler tummy of James himself.

"Oh, yes," said Burgess Noakes, "I went to Mr. James when I was fourteen as houseboy, and I remember three years later the butler and his wife, well they had to go really—because—I don't know whether I ought to say this—of course they drank very much. The butler was a splendid man except when he took drink. Mr. James was very fond of him and was awfully upset that he had to tell him to go, but he couldn't have him serving at table when he was—er—and pouring wine over the guests' clothes. Could he?... Ah yes, regular as clockwork Mr. James he'd go upstairs after lunch—and I'd go upstairs with him and change what clothes he wanted to wear and then he'd go off with his little dog, and many's the time I'd watch him out of the window. Often he got half-way up the street towards the church and you'd see him suddenly stop and his stick would go down and there he'd stand with his head slightly bent, you know, and his finger on his watch-chain like that. And then he'd start again and stop just the same way a hundred yards later. He had a habit—if he wanted to remember anything he'd tie a knot in his watch-chain—it'd

problem. He'd taken the prescription to an optician who'd told him that in 1911 James's eyes must have been remarkable for long-sight but not too hot for reading."

He looked at me triumphantly and I felt shamed by this fresh example of American know-how, this superb piece of James-forschering. Speechless I raked my mind for some boast which might restore my *amour-propre*; the shade of our beloved had conferred too great a favour on my rival. But nothing appropriate would come and I retired defeated.

If only that night of bitter subjugation had come a few months later! For then I might have applauded graciously and said quietly, modestly, and quite truthfully, "I was talking to Henry James's valet the other day..."

Yes, the "invaluable, irreplaceable



last service I was able to render him was—I shaved him after he died . . . No man, anyway, could have had a better Master."

And now I wait confidently for the next American James-forscher to call on me. I will give him all the rope he needs, encourage those comparisons between the various versions of *Louisa Pallant*, listen to theories on James's precise relationship with Minnie Temple, be fascinated when proof is offered me that Miss Birdseye was *positively not* Hawthorne's sister. And then, quietly, modestly, and quite truthfully I shall say "I was talking to Henry James's valet the other day . . ." MICHAEL SWAN

**Noblesse Oblige.** Edited by Nancy Mitford. *Hamish Hamilton*, 10/-

Most of us have by now had about as much of U and Non-U as we can take, but here is the whole extraordinary performance collected together and U-ifully illustrated by Mr. Osbert Lancaster. The volume includes Professor Alan A. C. Ross's article in *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* which touched off the explosion: Miss Nancy Mitford's piece on the English Aristocracy: Mr. Evelyn Waugh's open letter to Miss Mitford: with "Strix" of *The Spectator* chiefly on military U: Mr. Christopher Sykes on "What U-future": and Mr. John Betjeman's poignant lines beginning "Phone for the fish-knives" to make full measure.

Mr. Waugh rightly emphasizes that much of the interest in the subject lies in disparity of opinion. He himself, for example, writes "marquis" where some prefer "marquess." Miss Mitford is surely a trifle disingenuous about Uncle Matthew's employment of the term "dentures" in her own novel *The Pursuit of Love*, "as a joke." I re-read that excellent book last month, and noticed no explanation that it was "a joke"; or indeed that Uncle Matthew used it. The word is employed several

times by the narrator. However, Uncle Matthew did express disapproval of "notepaper," in which he differs here from that bluff soldier, "Strix." One is glad to have confirmation that "Scotch" is U, and "Scottish" Non-U. A. P.

**Beyond the Black Stump.** Nevil Shute. *Heinemann*, 15/-

The "outback" parts of West Australia Have given signs that, *inter alia*, Some biggish quantities of oil May lie beneath the sun-cooked soil. And so a team of pleasant Yanks, With coke in casks, ice-cream in tanks, Move in with their oil-drill machines And lots of glossy magazines. Young Stan from Oregon meets Mollie, Scots-Irish, "station"-bred. And golly! How slow, unpassionate and seemly Their courtship is! But still, extremely Useful as background while Shute gives The life an outback area lives. (You know the way they pour their rum On West Australian stations? Some Say four tots to the bottle; three, Say others: drink neat, all agree.) The story makes, as you might say, A Test Match (play and interplay) Australia v. U.S.A. . . . Friendly and sympathetic, though Contriving in the end to show That all the plumbing, clothes and scents

In glossy Yank advertisements Need not persuade the outback Mollie To contemplate with melancholy Her young man next-door-neighbour there, Not half an hour away by air.

R. A. U.

**Five of a Kind.** Roland Gant. *Jonathan Cape*, 15/-

The title of this ambitious novel also describes its weakness—too many parallel lines. To show how similar were the effects of the last war on the ordinary men who fought it Mr. Gant takes a Frenchman, an Englishman, an American, a German and a Russian and follows them through individual adventures, in each case leading to the same prison camp. There an emergency with a burning aeroplane brings them a rare moment of understanding, in which the hopeful American sees a chance of future brotherhood; but finally each goes back to fresh muddle and conflict. A good theme, but defiant of unity.

Mr. Gant spares us nothing in the way of horrors. His narrative is dramatic and the range of his descriptions remarkable. Where the novel fails is in being too much of a patchwork, in the sameness of so many of its scenes of violence, and also in the amount of straight military history which has to bind it together.

E. O. D. K.

**The Small World.** W. John Morgan. *Gollancz*, 12/6

One of the characters in this Welsh novel, in a sentence perhaps designed for reviewers, says "We like our comedy

wild or socially ikonoclastic." Here it is both. The central characters are three students born during the Slump, an iron-master's idealistic nephew, a cheerful athlete, and a warped observer and prodder of humanity. They share a liking for fanciful exuberance; but the foundry is never far away. They may be temporarily removed from realities, but not, like Wodehouse's young men, permanently. However, they are quite as funny and Mr. Morgan has a Wodehousian zest in episode and phrase.

The fight for power and the treacheries of local politics form the foundation rather than the background of the cheery farce, with its practical jokes and wild parties and ingeniously ruthless dialogue. Although the book has affinities with the novels of William Cooper, Gwyn Thomas and Kingsley Amis, it is even nearer to a comic *The House With the Green Shutters*. I should diffidently describe it as a smash hit.

R. G. G. P.

**Contagion to this World.** John Lodwick. *Heinemann*, 15/-

Mr. John Lodwick is a master of the picaresque novel—using the adjective in its true (rather than its contemporary, perverted) sense. His long gallery of the shady and the shoddy is enhanced by the portrait of Captain Maurice Chipstead (note the deliberate Sydney Horlerish parallel), expert liar, impostor, and contriver, who—unlike such characters as Graham Greene's Anthony Farrant in *England Made Me*—is haunted by no sense of cosmic guilt.

The setting of this new novel is Gades, a Spanish Atlantic city of "white appearance" (called by its inhabitants "The Saucer of Silver"), plague-stricken, beleaguered not only by disease but by barbed-wire entanglements, a mined sea, and martial law. Once again the author pits the humanistic principle—overlaid with a sharp superficial cynicism—as exemplified by Macartney, the British Consul, against the wily and indestructible Civil Governor Ferrados, while the beautiful phoenix-woman Remedios—a curious sort of latter-day saint—is removed by men in uniform and "her hands slung behind her back in awkward postures . . ." Humour, and Mr. Lodwick's peculiar, individual vein of poetry, are by no means absent from this enjoyable and idiosyncratic book.

J. M.-R.

**The Old Beauty and Others.** Willa Cather. *Cassell*, 9/6

Willa Cather died eight years ago, and these three short stories must be reckoned the last flourish of a great name in American letters. Their prose is placid and effortless; the virtues they portray are those of an earlier age. Lady Longstreet, the old, forgotten beauty of Edwardian days, has a brief but fatal Indian summer on the Riviera when she meets a suitor who has survived from her dazzling youth; in *The Best Years*, the



fortunes and misfortunes of a family and a young school superintendent are set out with formal delicacy, like a homely Currier and Ives print, in Nebraska half a century ago. *Before Breakfast* does little more than introduce a moose-hunting, Shakespeare-reading tycoon on an island off Nova Scotia, his antidote to an over-brilliant family.

The stories read like promising fragments, sketches for some long, *nuance* novel, but they are commendable indeed for their modest and fine style.

P. A. D.

### AT THE PLAY



*Romanoff and Juliet*  
(PICCADILLY)  
*Macbeth* (OLD VIC)  
*Gigi* (NEW)

ON the thin ice of international politics PETER USTINOV is now undeniably our champion performer. In *The Love of Four Colonels* he cut expert rings round the absurdities of post-war Europe; in *Romanoff and Juliet* he narrows his target to America and Russia, mocking their ways of life with brilliance and yet with the shrewd good-nature of an avuncular elder statesman. As satire it misses little, as a play it fits together enviably, as a comedy its originality is highly refreshing. Mr. USTINOV has put a check on his tendency to wander in pursuit of even cleverer ideas, and as a result this is by quite a long chalk the best play he has written.

Behind its fooling lies a solid core of wisdom. He himself is the President of a country so insignificant that its grand stratagem has always been the Balance of Feebleness. It is happy, bankrupt and gloriously backward; its one public clock has been losing time for so many centuries that even the nights and days have grown confused. This President is a kind of Mr. Chips in office, tender-hearted and dangerously civilized, handling with an ancient cunning his two problem-boys, the ambassadors of the United States and the Soviet Union. In JEAN DENIS MALCLES's single set of the main square the two Embassies, doll's-houses opening to disclose their secret dramas, face one another defiantly.

The plague on both the houses is the sudden ripening of love between the Russians' son and the Americans' daughter. On the one side we see a Russian breakfast, loaded monotonously with caviar, disintegrate into a sensuous orgy of accusation, confession and anticipation of approaching doom; on the other the mental torments of the free children of democracy, torn between the right of a daughter to select her mate and the certainty that a promising diplomatic career is about to dissolve in the acids of an Investigating Committee.

The President, however, is not only a romantic but a statesman of daring, who senses a golden chance to ring up the Iron Curtain. Taking advantage of one of the almost daily fiestas which form the



*The General*—PETER USTINOV

[*Romanoff and Juliet*]

chief amusement of his countrymen—the commemoration of a dynastic marriage in the dim past—at the critical moment he substitutes the lovers, and before their parents can grasp what has happened they are married. For a short time nuclear rage holds the field; then the bursting of two mothers' hearts melts everything, and good fellowship floods the scene as it has never yet flooded U.N.O. Headquarters. Everyone is happy, for even the jilted ones, the female captain of a minesweeper and the clean young millionaire, are fused in the general pantomime magic. If this is a little contrived, we are scarcely permitted to notice it.

Mr. USTINOV has been exceedingly adroit. He tears up the twin creeds of progress with the lightest of hands, and in a play which is often wildly amusing yet finds room for speeches far too sensible for the lips of world leaders. The best of these is splendidly delivered by FREDERICK VALK, as the Russian Ambassador. In an uncommonly funny performance the author, a fairy godfather in pince-nez and Novello uniform, keeps all the little wheels of intrigue spinning smartly. To mention only two others, with the rider that the whole cast is good and that DENIS CAREY's production holds it constantly on the ball, EDWARD ATIENZA makes a deliriously comic figure of the doddering Archbishop, and JOHN PHILLIPS caricatures memorably an honest servant of Washington.

MICHAEL BENTHALL's production of *Macbeth*, seen at the 1954 Edinburgh Festival and since then at the Old Vic,

comes back titivated, one guesses, for the American market, with enough assorted tartans to stock a bargain basement in Princes Street, and a piper liberally underlining the horrors of an unstinted horrific evening. It is patchy work. The Porter has been given some tedious business with an imaginary door, at the banquet the guests fall in heaps as if they, as well as Macbeth, had seen the ghost, and young Macduff is allowed to look older than his mother; but though the poetry is not well spoken, the production pays off as melodrama. The chief change of cast brings in a new Lady Macbeth, CORAL BROWNE, whose personality contains the strength and passion needed by a Scottish hostess of the period. A good performance; for once Lady M. might have done it.

In Colette's story from which ANITA LOOS has adapted *Gigi* there was presumably a stiffening of hard wit. In the intervening wash this has disappeared, leaving a terribly thin play which to me was also rather nauseating. The attempted sale of a girl of sixteen to an amorous millionaire by a gaggle of retired *cocottes* (mother, aunt and grandmother) is made no more acceptable by fumbling dialogue trying to be worldly-smart; with her natural revulsion, leading surprisingly to a love-match with this infinitely dreary young man, we plunge into unbridled sentimentality. All the main characters are bores (which the acting does little to disguise) except the child herself, taken by LESLIE CARON with so much feeling and charm that I

look forward to seeing her in a play of substance. She is small, *gamine* and in this part touchingly *gauche*. Spirit, intelligence and simplicity are all there.

#### Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

For laughter of the higher order *Hotel Paradiso* (Winter Garden—9/5/56), with ALEC GUINNESS, *The Chalk Garden* (Haymarket—25/4/56), with EDITH EVANS and PEGGY ASHCROFT, and TYRONE GUTHRIE's antic production of *Troilus and Cressida* (Old Vic—18/4/56).

ERIC KEOWN

#### AT THE CIRCUS



*The Moscow State Circus  
(HARRINGAY)*

PERHAPS the Cossacks have provided all the thrills that were needed, but it is odd that in a country as addicted to the horse as Russia the State Circus should include only one equestrian turn. This makes a fundamental difference, to which even those of us blacklisted by the horse since the nursery must adjust ourselves. Even if the finer points of *haute école* at "A" level are lost on us, to our way of thinking the ring should carry an unmistakable tang of the stables; to that of the Russians the ring is mainly a theatre-in-the-round for the fuller presentation of the more exciting acts of vaudeville. So no sawdust.

Not, obviously, that the horse is beyond our visitors from Moscow. Their single equestrian item would gladden any circus, for ALEXANDRE SERGE's troupe of bareback acrobats could clearly ride from Harringay to Vladivostok standing

with arms folded and balancing a few friends on their heads. Here, as everywhere in this notably polished programme, the timing is wonderful. The chief property of the troupe is a comfortable perambulating platform named Alem, a vast cheerful creature who would scarcely sag if an elephant cadged a lift on his back. He laps at a cracking pace, never changing his expression of toothy optimism while five men made of rubber leap on and off his back, somersaulting and performing astonishing gyrations.

The only other animal turn demonstrates the sagacity and sense of balance of the brown bear. I dare say Pooh has left us a little thin-skinned, but I didn't like it much. Something about a bear on his hind legs in a ballet skirt gets too near the knuckle. He becomes human and pathetic, his swaying walk suggests a dowager trying gamely to keep up with one cocktail too many; and a muzzled dowager at odds with alcohol makes a rather irritating appeal to one's chivalry. There seems to me a practical objection as well, that the bear isn't a natural buffoon, as the sea-lion is, but a serious-minded beast which either eats you or allows himself gravely to accept a bun. This is not, however, to minimize the persuasive powers of VALENTIN FILATOV. One of his charges, apparently equipped with radar, strolls resolutely about the ring blindfold, and climbs two ladders at once. Others ride motor-cycles in the dark—really a very remarkable act—dash around contemptuously on cycles, tricycles and scooters, go through a series of woolly acrobatics, and juggle flaming torches with their paws.

If the visual glamour of the horse is missing from this circus, we have fair compensation in the sheer skill of the human performers and the grace of all their movements, which seems to borrow from ballet. Their physical control is magnificent, and the finish and intricacy of many of their feats leave one gasping. The high-wire TSOVKRA troupe from Daghestan, for instance, uses a spring-board on the wire until the man balancing has two of his mates on his shoulders. They can somersault from the wire on to the man in front, and they can balance on one another's heads. In fact, with enormous gusto, they can do almost anything you and I couldn't manage on the ground, and when they come down they give the best display of high-speed tumbling I have ever seen.

The two CHUBINS particularly aroused my envy. JURI can balance single-handed on a stick, which is good enough; but while he stands on his head NINA, with the confidence of a Cinquevalli, throws rings two at a time from a respectable distance so that they curve slowly outwards to fall perfectly over his up-ended toes. The pure pleasure conveyed by this simple but exquisite achievement is impossible to describe. With feet as well as hands VIOLETTE and ALEXANDRE KISS (only the promise of their names

disappointed) juggle as masters, with all sorts of objects; and MICHAEL EGOROV walks up and down stairs on his hands, which I must confess I found a trifle tiring to watch.

One of the few women in the world who can sit squarely on her own head, VALENTINA DEMINA is another Tilly Losch, a filleted contortionist, but here again grace of movement comes first. It is comforting to know that in Russia two men still dare to fling a girl about; VLADIMIR FOMENKO and his confederate, however, do so with ideological precision, and as no part of the sex war. In the upper air (where I am never quite so happy) you have the blood-curdling antics of HÉLÈNE SINKOVSKA and VICTOR LISIN, while they hang from a circling aircraft looking as if it must be on the secret list, and the equally paralyzing frolics of the FOUR BOUBNOV, extremely presentable girls who make child's play of the high trapeze.

On the funny side are two selfless dead-pan knockabouts, VASSILI MOZEL and ANICIN SAWITCH; but chiefly there is OLEG POPOV. Until a short while ago this engaging youth was a compositor on *Pravda*. How good a compositor, we are not told. His work may have been unacceptably studded with the Russian equivalent of ETAOIN SHIRDLU SHIRDLU, but in any case one is glad he became a clown. He has the round china-blue eyes and big innocent mouth of a Dutch puppet, and he wears no make-up on his large face. His properties are a stick, a flat cap and a baggy suit. It happens that he is a fine juggler and a champion on the slack wire, which he uses as a hammock, but most of the time he plays the impish gadfly to the rest of the company, squeaking his delight as he outwits them. When POPOV swallows a whistle he nearly stops the show. He is a merry and a sad little man, and I grew to like him very much.

ERIC KEOWN

#### AT THE OPERA

*The Queen of Spades  
(COVENT GARDEN)*

MANY Englishmen heard *The Queen of Spades* for the first time in German at the State Opera in the Soviet sector while in Berlin during the mid 'forties under the aegis of Mil. Gov. You went in from streets where bewildered gentlewomen were loading trucks with rubble because they had been Party members, and you sat among Soviet majors and women with knobby foreheads and a lot of nostril. During the interval Berliners paced the lobbies with pallid, rubbed-out faces, or went to the buffet for watery beer and slices of black bread smeared with chutney substitute.

In this muted hell TCHAIKOVSKY's music, all purple and gilded glooms, was a mockery. Who could take the Byronic despairs of Herman seriously with the



*The Moscow State Circus  
OLEG POPOV*

cyanide capsule State so freshly remembered? Yet the opera had one interlude which pointed away from all this and from the rest of the music, an interlude soaked in sunlight and innocence. Into the ball scene, Act 2, TCHAIKOVSKY slotted a masque of the Dresden china sort, with a soprano Chloe, a contralto Daphnis and a baritone Plutus, who sang of their woes and joys in Mozartian thirds and sixths while the dancers paused or pirouetted around them. This Faithful Shepherdess masque is TCHAIKOVSKY's incense to Mozart's genius—"the culminating point," he wrote in his diary, "of all beauty in the sphere of music. He alone can make me weep and tremble with delight at the approach of that which we call the Ideal."

Coming home from Berlin we sat down and waited for Covent Garden to follow in the State Opera's footsteps. *The Queen of Spades* came up in 1950. On the appointed afternoon I got out the vocal score and ran through the masque music on my piano with watering mouth. On the night not a note of it was sung. The masque had been judged expendable. For days I walked about in a fury of frustration.

After six years the Opera House has seen the light. The production has been revised. At last the masque is with us, prettily dressed by OLIVER MESSEL, well enough danced to please opera-goers (for ballet-goers I cannot speak), and gracefully sung as to the thirds and sixths by JOAN CARLYLE and MONICA SINCLAIR, the whole conducted affectionately and fleetly by Mr. KUBELIK. At the interval an English composer and his boy friend looked at their fingernails and said of The Faithful Shepherdess, *unisono*, an octave apart: "Sweet, yes. But we're not overboard about it. Mozart and Tchaikovsky don't tone."

Nor do red and blue. Goya, Bonington, Cotman, Constable, just about everybody, in fact, often put them side by side in the same painting, however.

CHARLES REID

## AT THE PICTURES

*Woman of the River*  
*The Bold and the Brave*

WHEN a big Hollywood company puts up the money for a foreign-language film to be shown with superimposed titles, one looks suspiciously for the "commercial" angle; and it is not difficult to find in the Italian-made (with American backing) *Woman of the River* (Director: MARIO SOLDATTI), which it is safe to say was expected to sell on the publicized sex-appeal of SOPHIA LOREN in the title part. Miss or Signorina LOREN is a beauty of a rather more proud and statuesque order than some of the other Italian beauties we have seen, and the film is considerably more than a mere "vehicle" for the display of her charms. It has the characteristic Italian virtue of pleasing reality



[Woman of the River

Nives—SOPHIA LOREN

and freshness in detail, and visually (Technicolor photography: ROBERTO GERARDI) it is very satisfactory indeed.

The story is heavily dramatic and ends in tragedy; summed up in two or three sentences, it would be likely to scare plenty of average moviegoers away. But the point about this one is that continual brightness and crispness of detail, that fresh brilliance and effectiveness in the way the surroundings and lives of the characters are shown. The girl, or woman, we see first as a worker in what the synopsis calls an eel factory (which it is tempting to reflect ought to be next door to a sole factory, but seems to be merely a place where eels are topped and tailed and processed for, presumably, canning); she is proud and independent and seems not to share the other girls' lively interest in amorous diversions, but at last has an affair with a handsome trawler-owner. He is also a cigarette-smuggler; and stung by his insults when she tells him of a coming child, she gives him away to the police. Two years later he escapes from prison and seeks her for revenge, but finds her mourning the death of the child. This softens him up for his proper place in the tragedy and he goes back to prison with bowed head.

Yes, the outlines of the piece are conventional, but all the same it is a pleasure to watch. The scene is round about the Po delta in uninterrupted fine weather, and every moment is brightened with some interesting detail. The girl's habit of riding her bicycle smartly on to the stern of the ferry-boat, the dog and the geese on the fringe of the boys' hide-and-seek game, the comic little incidents at the open-air dance—this kind of thing is what counts.

The electrifying comic vitality of MICKEY ROONEY is what carries *The Bold*

and the *Brave* (Director: LEWIS R. FOSTER), a story of Americans in Italy in 1944. I feared the worst at the beginning, when what is usually called a "rousing" marching song all about the Bold and the Brave boomed out behind the credit titles; but it proved to be not that sort of film at all. This is in its way something of a psychological work, about soldiers with hidden problems; not, of course, that they are very profoundly examined. The battle scenes are quite convincingly done, and even the psychology passes muster at the time (though I didn't quite follow the reasoning of the soldier who comes to consider himself a coward because he cannot bring himself to fire at a sniper who is about to kill him), but it is the brilliant and extremely funny comedy of Mr. ROONEY, particularly in a wonderfully directed scene in which he wins thousands of dollars in a tumultuous dice game, that lifts the film out of the general run.

\* \* \* \* \*

### Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The new one I have most enjoyed is *Storm Centre*, with BETTE DAVIS: no colour, no wide screen, no violence, no "romance"—just a very good intelligent film of which more next week. *Death of a Cyclist* (23/5/56) continues, but there is only one more day of *The African Lion* (11/4/56).

Releases include the first-rate suspense-and-murder piece *A Kiss Before Dying* (2/5/56), the enjoyably nonsensical Hitchcock *The Trouble With Harry* (16/5/56), the effective though exaggerated thick-ear melodrama *Hell on Frisco Bay* (25/4/56), and quite a striking bit of science-fiction, *On the Threshold of Space* (25/4/56).

RICHARD MALLETT



## ON THE AIR

## Snap Interview

MOST of us enjoy involuntary snooping. To sit at a bar and collect frayed ends of gossip and argument can be wonderfully entertaining. When we don't have to look into their eyes and punctuate their discourse with "yerse" and "mm" even bores can be tolerated.

On radio and TV we are seldom allowed to snoop: the gossip is prearranged, the argument balanced on a knife-edge of political compromise, and the bores read from vetted scripts. The B.B.C. and the I.T.A. try very hard to promote virile unscripted discussion. They arrange celebrated vocal firebrands in panels and trusts of symposia and shoot questions at them, and the firebrands become mealy-mouthed and platitudinous. The B.B.C., I know, is worried by this transmogrification. It can do nothing about it. Speakers, like producers, are flattened by the dead-weight of traditional conformity and institutional palaver.

There are, however, moments when the microphone and camera escape from the baleful pedagogic glare of Portland Place and go out and about with refreshing zest. Then we may hear terse outspoken comment from the man in the street about the Budget, strikes, prices, sport or the weather. With the aid of carefully edited film, television sometimes manages to make the snap interview sparkle. In recent weeks we have had excellent stuff from "Panorama" and the West of England studios (always pretty reliable). Woodrow Wyatt used his interviews to illustrate the apathy among engineers confronted by Communist attempts to control their union. Worker



WOODROW WYATT

EARTHA KITT

after worker stepped forward to explain why he couldn't be bothered to attend branch meetings and record his vote. The cumulative effect of these repetitious declarations of masterly inactivity was rather frightening. Never has this facet of the British character been more accurately spotlighted. Woodrow Wyatt's film interviews with people in Europe's trouble-spots have often seemed to me lacking in balance and sometimes quite futile. To see a succession of dull-witted natives solemnly mouthing a prepared line of English ("The British no friend—I want them go") is neither illuminating nor useful. There are times when "Panorama's" foreign reporting falls well below the standard set by American television and the I.T.A.'s film units, but on this occasion, a home front encounter with lackadaisical organized labour, the interviews, the camera work, the editing and production were of the highest quality.

The Bristol inquiry into the Church's

influence at factory level, "Out of Touch?" lost marks with me because it featured one of my pet abominations—the hearty, backslapping, "God-is-jolly-D" type of clergyman. This gentleman talked of "pew fodder" and "the Bishop's odd bod" and almost made me switch off in agnostic disgust. The interviews saved the programme. Once again we were able to snoop, to hear the ordinary worker explain why the Church fails to compete successfully with the telly and why he still feels that religion is "O.K. for the kids." These snap interviews, laced with good commentary, make TV a live medium of entertainment and instruction, and help dedicated viewers to sit in hope through endless reels of contrived fun and games.

One thing the I.T.A.'s commercials have done for television is to make the B.B.C. spot-conscious. Nowadays it is ever ready to fill up the odd minute with racy chatter about forthcoming programmes and stars. The old interval signals have been stored in the attic to make room for breezy trailers, advertising puffs for the purveyors of studio comedy and bursts of propaganda from the public relations boys. Anything to prevent the viewer from switching over to Channel 9.

Unfortunately, these natural breaks in an evening's programmes are getting longer. When it uses American TV film the B.B.C. has to cut out the commercials and make do with twenty-four minutes of screen time instead of the scheduled thirty, and that leaves six minutes to the advance publicity brigade. Six minutes too many. The trailer advertising Eartha Kitt's appearance in a wretched little play called *The Valiant* cut very near the knuckle of verbal vulgarity.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



D. W. L. S.

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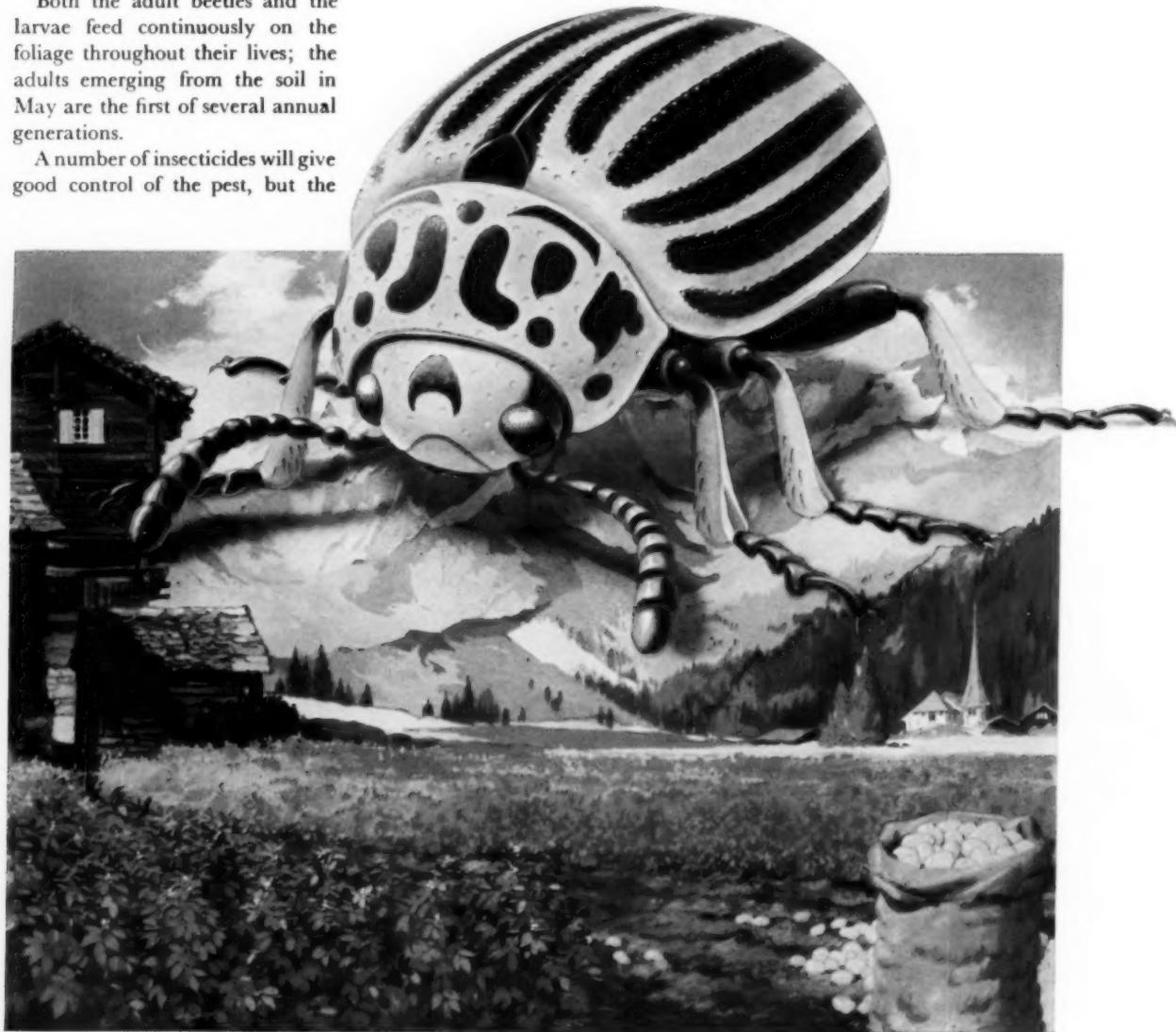
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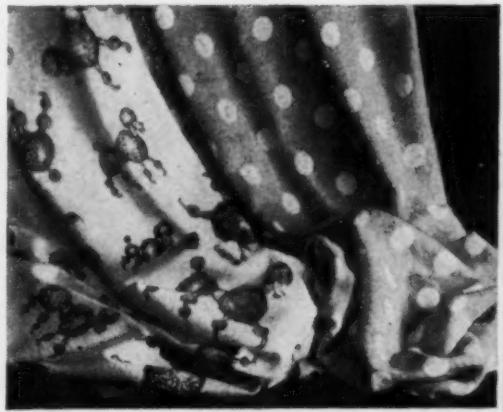
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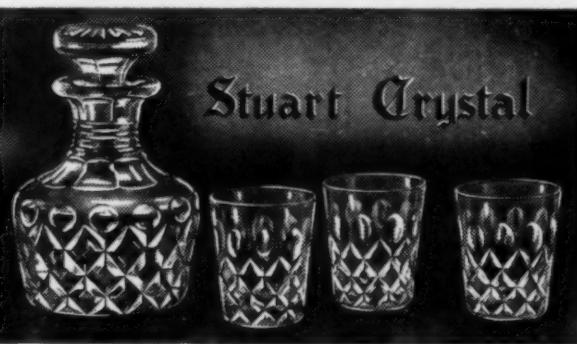
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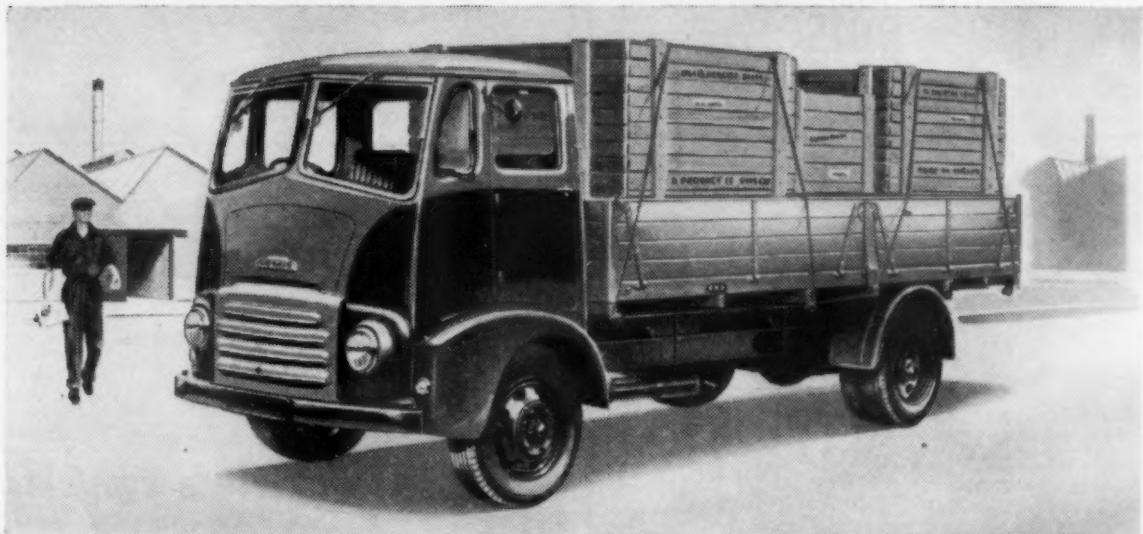
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The famous 3·4 litre diesel engine. Four cylinder, 58 b.h.p. at 2,400 r.p.m., five-bearing crankshaft.

MORRIS COMMERCIAL CARS LTD.,  
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Overseas Business:  
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MC 4/1



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As any just-marrieds will tell you, if your wedding gift is an Anglepoise, then you've lit on something delightfully different. She'll use it, he'll borrow it, they'll both love it for the light and luxury it gives to the home. In fact, from a hundred and one angles, an Anglepoise is a bright and beautiful idea for that next wedding present... and such a change from toast-racks.

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**TERRY Anglepoise**  
Regd.  
LAMP  
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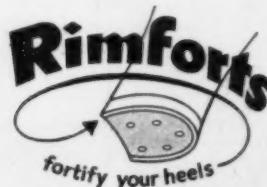
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In Honeysuckle  
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ELECTRIC BLANKETS

**'SO NICE TO GO HOME TO'**

MODERN ELECTRICAL INDUSTRIES LIMITED, KNOTTINGLEY, YORKSHIRE.



Hair Style by Manetta & Jean

*"Now tell me how you like my coffee"*

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There's a very simple reason . . . Freshly ground coffee beans will only make the best coffee if the beans themselves are **fresh**. The coffee beans used by Lyons are roasted and ground at the peak of their freshness, then the coffee is *immediately* aroma-sealed (by an exclusive Lyons process) in the well-known green tins. **It is the freshest coffee you can buy.**

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Through long-range planning, and the enthusiasm of experienced technicians, Thames Board Mills are building up their productive capacity to meet the ever-growing needs of industry.

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#### LOOK FORWARD TO IT

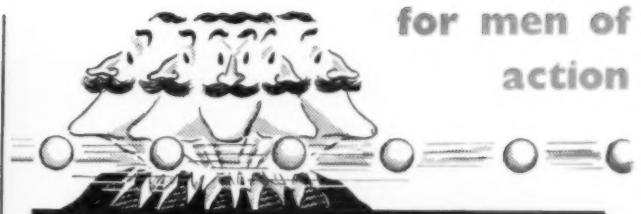
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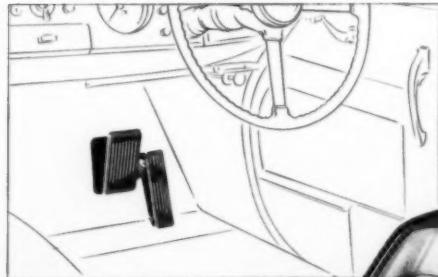
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